AN ANALYSIS OF PLATO'S PHILEBUS

PLEASURE KNOWLEDGE AND BEING

Cynthia Hampton

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An Analysis of Plato's *Philebus*

Cynthia Hampton

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE AUTHORS OF MY BEING,
MY PARENTS, AND TO MY FIRST SOCRATIC
INTERLOCUTOR, MY BROTHER.

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PREFACE

My work on the *Philebus,* in various forms and stages of development, has had a long gestation. Consequently, I have many people to thank. Under the direction of Richard Parry, I first wrote on this dialogue as part of my Agnes Scott College honors thesis on the Theory of Forms in the later dialogues. In graduate school at Northwestern, I decided to concentrate on the four kinds passage in the *Philebus,* and was supported by my dissertation committee composed of R. E. Allen, Kenneth Seeskin, and John McCumber. The transition from dissertation to conference papers and published articles was much aided by Martha Nussbaum, the members of her 1985 NEH seminar in Greek ethics, Jonathan Barnes, Larry Jost, Lee Horvitz, and my colleagues in the philosophy department at Ohio University.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1875, George Grote spoke for many Platonic scholars when he described the *Philebus* as "neither clear, nor orderly . . . . Every commentator of Plato, from Galen downward, has complained of the obscurity of the *Philebus*."[1] One hundred years later, J. C. B. Gosling, in the most recent complete commentary on the *Philebus* (1975), contends that the structure of the dialogue becomes clear if it is seen as a response to the mathematician Eudoxus, whose views on pleasure, according to Aristotle, were enlisted to support vulgar hedonism. But the overall coherence of the *Philebus* does not result from its sustained line of argument. "There are other ways of pursuing a coherent strategy than developing a close-knit argument and Plato is not above them."[2] Kenneth Sayre in *Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Resolved* (1983),[3] and Gisela Striker in *Peras und Apeiron* (1970),[4] are both more optimistic than Gosling about how the arguments of the dialogue fit together as a whole. But they both concentrate on the ontology without seriously considering how it is essentially related to the classifications and ranking of both pleasure and knowledge. Sayre, like Gosling, also appeals to sources outside the Platonic corpus, such as Aristotle's testimony, instead of considering the *Philebus* either on its own terms or in relation to other Platonic dialogues. In general, these commentators produce coherent interpretations only by ignoring key aspects of the dialogue, and therefore do not reveal the coherent structure of the *Philebus* as a whole.

Despite the perennial and current complaints about the obscurity of the *Philebus,* I intend to demonstrate that the dialogue does have a fundamentally coherent or unified structure which is revealed upon careful consideration of how the announced topic of the good life is related to the ontological and methodological/epistemological passages. Careful attention must be paid to how these passages are presented in the text. Although I recognize that the *Philebus,* like any of Plato's dialogues, is a multidimensional work, my

primary concern is with what might be called the argumentative or persuasive features. I take as my starting point the assumption that Plato's arguments cannot be understood apart from the context in which they arise, so that one must keep in mind what has been said previously in the dialogue, and why a given argument is presented at the point that it is. Certain dramatic aspects of the dialogue also need to be kept in mind along with the more discursive features. I, however, am only interested in the points where the dramatic context sheds light on the discursive, since my primary aim is to illuminate the dialogue in terms of the latter. Even so, I take it that Plato's arguments are not dry logical exercises but rather are meant to persuade both his interlocutors and readers to live good lives. In order to do so, Plato addresses the issue of the good life in terms of true and false world views (ontology), and of the accurate recognition of reality (methodology and epistemology). Thus the dialogue shifts back and forth between ethics, ontology, and methodology/epistemology. No wonder that commentators, who often expect (or at least desire) Plato's arguments to be presented in a linear fashion, end up railing against the obscurity of the *Philebus!* Nevertheless, there is method in his (apparent) madness, which I intend to reveal by striving for the most straightforward interpretation possible. (In terms of a general approach to the *Philebus,* I consider myself closest to Reginald Hackforth, whose book I still find refreshingly common-sensical despite some disagreements I have with it.) In order to get a general idea of the seemingly complex interrelation of the ethical, ontological, and methodological/epistemological strands in the *Philebus,* let us consider the following brief synopsis.

The central question posed in the dialogue concerns the roles of pleasure and knowledge in the good life. Socrates first tries to help Protarchus (who stands in for Philebus after the latter has withdrawn from active participation in the discussion, at 11C) to realize that "pleasure" does not refer to some monolithic entity, by persuading Protarchus to grant as a hypothesis that both pleasure and knowledge are of various types, some of which may even oppose one another (12C–14B). These types must be enumerated and analyzed in order to understand the relation of each to the good life. At this point, Socrates identifies the problem of classifying pleasure and knowledge with a number of puzzles *(aporiai)* about the one and the many (14C–15C) which he approaches by introducing what he calls the Divine Method (16C–18D). Instead of directly applying this method to pleasure and knowledge, Socrates and Protarchus first agree that neither pleasure nor knowledge in isolation from each other constitutes the good life, but rather a mixture of the two does. The question then becomes, which plays the more important role in the good life, pleasure or knowledge? (20D–23C). In order to settle this issue, Socrates first divides the cosmos into four kinds:

the indefinite *(apeiron)*, the definite *(peras)*, the mixture of the two *(meikton)*, and the cause *(aitia)*. He shows subsequently that intelligence, rather than pleasure, is more important to the good life since it is associated with the cause of the universal order, whereas pleasure is by its very nature indefinite (22D–31C). Socrates and Protarchus then turn to classifying both pleasure and knowledge (31B–59D). Various types of both are then ranked according to their importance for the good life. First place belongs to measure and the mean while second prize goes to proportion and beauty. The highest form of knowledge, which consists of intelligence or practical reason *(phronesis)* and intellectual intuition *(nous)*, place third, the lower forms of knowledge come in fourth, while pure and painless pleasures bring up the rear. Pleasures mixed with pain are not included at all. This ranking is made in accordance with an outline of the Good in its three aspects of Truth, Proportion, and Beauty (59E–67B).

To show how these various components of the *Philebus* cohere is not an easy task; nevertheless, it can be done at least in terms of finding the knots which bring the major threads together. The purpose of this work is to point out these knots, which can be done best by going through each major section of the dialogue to see how these threads are spun and then tied together. My major contention is that the classification of both pleasure and knowledge and their subsequent ranking in the good life is made on ontological grounds. The higher types of both pleasure and knowledge are accorded this rank because the objects with which they are associated are ontologically superior to those objects tied more closely to the sensible world.

In the classification of pleasure, its ontological aspect is crucial to understanding Plato's distinction between true and false pleasures, since his conception of truth turns out to be an ontological one, i.e. what is true is what accurately reflects the proper order of reality. The highest pleasures arise from the absolute beauty of the divine circle, straight line, solid figure, etc., and are pure (unmixed with pain) and inherently definite. The lowest pleasures, on the other hand, arise from distorted bodily and/or psychic states and are inherently indefinite, being mixed with their opposite, pain. Purity and definiteness are marks of the true while their opposites are associated with falsehood. Pleasures get their character from the way the agent regards the objects with which they are concerned. That is, if the agent correctly regards the divine objects as the highest, she will be able to experience the pleasures associated with them accordingly. But if she misplaces something that arouses the physical appetites and/or emotions (e.g. money, eating, or watching a comedy) above their proper station in the hierarchy of being, she will be indulging in the false pleasures that belong to a distorted view of reality. In other words, the basis for the elaborate attack on hedonism in the

Philebus is the idea that those who center their lives around earthly pleasures do so because they have a profoundly mistaken world view which is indicated by the fact that they act as if the sensible world were unqualifiedly real and valuable. In this way, Plato expands upon the anti-hedonistic position which he presented in the *Gorgias* and developed in the *Republic*.

Similarly, the basis for ranking *phronesis* and *nous,* i.e. the dialectic, as the highest type of cognition, is the elevated status of its object: true Being. At 58A–59C, a passage very reminiscent of Book VII of the *Republic,* the objects of the dialectic are contrasted to those of the arts and sciences *(technai)* in terms of stability, purity and truth. The former are, to use Gregory Vlastos' phrase, "cognitively dependable"[5] but are so because they, unlike sensibles, are real without qualification. The phrase, "true Being" also has evaluative connotations that are grounded in the ontological sense of truth. By the end of the dialogue, Plato reveals that Truth, as an aspect of the Good, enables everything to have its proper measure of reality. So to appreciate truth fully, one must accord to everything its proper value as an expression of a true understanding of reality, both distributively and collectively. The dialectic, which is identified with the Divine Method (17A), makes this understanding possible by revealing the basic structure of the realm of true Being, which in turn explains the underlying order of the sensible world. In fact, I shall argue that the dialectic in the *Philebus* ultimately leads to the Good as it did in the *Republic*.

In emphasizing the ontological basis of the discussion of pleasure and knowledge in the *Philebus,* my approach differs significantly from that of other commentators, including Gosling. As noted, Gosling maintains that the overall strategy of the dialogue is to respond to Eudoxus, especially regarding the use of his views to support a crude type of hedonism. The Divine Method (what Gosling calls the "Heavenly Tradition") is simply a Pythagorean type of approach to *technai,* i.e. productive skills, as opposed to *episteme,* meaning either knowledge in general or such disciplines as mathematics and the dialectic.[6] This is Plato's response to Eudoxus, who as a mathematician was influenced by Pythagoreanism and was interested in the problem of irrationals.[7] The central question of the dialogue up to 22C–E is whether a *techne* exists for pleasure. Afterward, however, Socrates and Protarchus decide that the good life is a mixture of pleasure and intelligence, so the focus of the discussion shifts to the production of good mixtures, which depends on having the right *techne*.[8] The four kinds are simply tools to facilitate this discussion of the products of *technai;* they have nothing to do with the Theory of Forms:

> While 15A–B [the discussion of the *aporiai*] almost certainly alludes to

> Forms and Plato very likely still held, as in *Republic* X, that things studied by *technai* were somehow related to the Forms, the *Philebus* is silent on the subject. None of the categories in 23 seq. is to be taken as the class Forms, nor is any to be taken as being a Form.[9]

Since Gosling denies that the Forms are important in those passages which are apparently ontological, his failure to recognize any ontological implications in the classifications and final ranking of pleasure and knowledge is no surprise. To him, the discussion of true and false pleasures is muddled. For example, in the use of *alethes* (true or genuine) "it seems impossible to acquit Plato of the charge of rank equivocation."[10] Gosling also dismisses the suggestions in the dialogue that the dialectic is the highest type of cognition because of the elevated nature of its objects. In fact, he takes the grading of the various types of knowledge to be inconsistent since he sees two different scales being used: one according to method and the other according to subject matter.[11] Finally, Gosling asserts, without argument, that the Good is not the Form, but rather the good for humanity.[12]

Gosling's denial of an ontological dimension to the *Philebus* is the main reason he finds so many lacunae in Plato's line of argument and gaps in the dialogue's structure. According to his interpretation, the *aporiai* of the one and the many are mentioned but never discussed again, the Divine Method—despite Plato's explicit claims—is not introduced as a way to solve the puzzles, and neither it nor the four kinds are utilized in the classifications of pleasure and knowledge. As I have briefly indicated above and will elaborate in my analysis of individual passages in the text, the ontological, methodological and ethical strands of the dialogue do in fact come together, albeit in a rather circuitous way. But in order to see this one must first take Plato at his word and assume, at least initially, that if he says, e.g., the Divine Method applies to the *aporiai,* then he means just that. Instead of this straightforward approach to the text, Gosling looks for the structure of the dialogue by assuming that Aristotle has accurately reported Eudoxus' views on pleasure and that these views are what Plato is responding to in the *Philebus*. As mentioned, Sayre also reads the *Philebus* through the lens of Aristotle's testimony, but in his case, the testimony in question focuses on Plato's ontological theory. In fact, the use of Aristotle's testimony represents a major strategy in *Philebus* scholarship. As such, it deserves further comment.

Commentators often enlist the aid of Aristotle to help decipher obscure passages in the Platonic corpus. Edith Watson Schipper, Robert Gregg Bury, and Reginald Hackforth, for example, all accept Aristotle's testimony at *Metaphysics* 987B15 and elsewhere that the ontology of the *Philebus*

includes "intermediate mathematical objects." Each subsequently draws a different conclusion from Aristotle's interpretation. Schipper concludes that the Forms are in the *peras,*[13] Bury maintains that only the mathematicals are in the *peras,* [14] and Hackforth argues that the Forms are behind *peras* just as they are behind the *eida kai arithmoi* of the *Timaeus,* which he identifies as mathematical objects.[15] All, however, begin their arguments with the assumption that Aristotle has accurately reported a Platonic doctrine. But is this assumption justified?

An immediate problem arises if Aristotle's testimony concerning the mathematicals (or, as they are sometimes called, "the intermediates") is taken at face value. As Julia Annas has pointed out, Aristotle sees the mathematicals as Plato's answer to what she calls the "Uniqueness Problem": although arithmetical statements cannot be about the sensible world, they cannot be about Forms either since each Form is unique; e.g., only one Form "Two" exists, so statements like "2 + 2 = 4" cannot refer to the Forms.[16] Yet nowhere in the dialogues does Plato recognize this problem. In only two passages does Plato explicitly *argue*—as opposed to merely suggest—that mathematicals exist, but neither involves the Uniqueness Problem.[17] The first passage is *Republic* 509D–511A, the Divided Line. Here the point is to distinguish different stages in cognition so one need not conclude that mathematical thinking *(dianoia)* must have a completely different kind of object than does the apprehension of Forms *(noesis)* such as Justice. The other passage is *Philebus* 56C–59D (with 61D–62B) which concerns the need for philosophical mathematics.[18] If Annas is right, then we have no conclusive evidence that Aristotle's testimony about the mathematicals is accurate.[19]

Aristotle attributes to Plato not just the mathematicals but an entire mathematical theory, in *Metaphysics* Books A, M, and N. Once again, much of this theory does not correspond to any *explicit* discussion in the dialogues. As a result, many scholars have either dismissed Aristotle's testimony or conjectured that these features are a part of Plato's "Unwritten Doctrine." Both of these alternatives—as Kenneth Sayre has pointed out[20]—have undesirable consequences. On the one hand, how can Aristotle be wrong if, as a member of the Academy, he was in a position to know the beliefs of his teacher? But, on the other hand, if the "Unwritten Doctrine" theory is correct, then we have the disheartening result that Plato's most mature and complete thoughts were never committed to writing. The dialogues represent only rough outlines of his true position.

We may still slip out from between the horns of this dilemma by maintaining that these doctrines are implicitly stated in the dialogues. Hackforth, for example, considers the Dyad of the Great and Small

mentioned by Aristotle both at *Metaphysics* A6 and *Physics* 206B27 to be equivalent to the *apeiron* in the *Philebus*.[21] Unfortunately, since Hackforth maintains that "plainly the [ἄπειρον] is thus conceived,"[22] he does not argue for his interpretation. Similarly, David Kolb assumes, without argument, that the "Unwritten Doctrines" stand behind the *Philebus*.[23]

Henry Jackson does argue that the ontology described in *Metaphysics* I.6 is depicted in the *Philebus*.[24] But he can reconcile the two only by adopting a peculiar reading of both Aristotle and Plato. Similarly, Kenneth Sayre argues that if we accept Aristotle's testimony, then a better interpretation of the *Philebus* will result.[25] I have argued elsewhere[26] that this is not the case. Since the tendency to read the Philebus through Aristotle's interpretation is so prevalent, a close examination of Jackson and Sayre as major representatives of this approach is in order. I shall undertake this examination in the Appendix.

While reliance on texts outside the Platonic corpus fairly obviously involves the borrowing of trouble, what about the connection between the *Philebus* and other dialogues? The tendency to read the *Philebus* through its assumed connection with other later dialogues such as the *Sophist* or *Timaeus* is common even among nineteenth-century European scholars, including the French Neoplatonists Georges Rodier and Leon Robin,[27] as well those influenced by German Idealism.[28] But this tendency is especially prevalent among Anglo-American commentators because of the increasingly popular and controversial thesis of revisionism,[29] the notion that after the *Parmenides* Plato either abandons or radically modifies the Theory of Forms found in the middle dialogues. If this thesis is true, then such central metaphysical and epistemological doctrines as the priority of Being to Becoming and knowledge to true belief, since they are grounded in the theory of transcendent Forms,[30] either should be dismissed along with the Forms themselves or fortified by a significantly different type of ontology. The metaphysical passages of the *Philebus* represent key texts for critics who advocate either of these alternatives as well as for those who deny the revisionist thesis. Among the former, the *Philebus* is seen as either presenting no ontology at all or one not involving transcendent Forms. The anti-revisionists,[31] of course, maintain that the dialogue depicts Forms that are essentially the same as those found in the middle dialogues.[32]

But just which dialogues were written before the *Parmenides* and which after? Along with revisionism comes a renewed interest in the chronology of Plato's works. The most famous controversy is the one between G. E. L. Owen[33] and Harold Cherniss[34] over the dating of the *Timaeus*. Recently, R. A. H. Waterfield has claimed that the *Philebus* is a middle dialogue.[35] Waterfield states that doctrinal considerations, rather than

literary criticism, historical evidence, or stylometry, should provide the criteria by which the chronology of Plato's dialogues should be judged. He argues that because the *Philebus* makes an ontological distinction between Being and Becoming, retains paradigmatic Forms, etc., it must be a middle dialogue. This conclusion, however, follows only if one assumes, along with Waterfield, that Plato went through a "critical period" when he wrote the *Parmenides,* and afterward abandoned these elements of his earlier metaphysics.[36] Given the fact that Waterfield fails to justify this assumption, he offers no reasons to reject the traditional late dating of the *Philebus* based upon the stylometric evidence provided by the diverse methods of Campbell, Lutoslawski, Ritter, and Brandwood.[37] According to this evidence, the *Philebus* was certainly written after the *Parmenides* and Plato's first trip to Syracuse (367 B.C.) and perhaps after the second visit in 361 B.C.

As a later dialogue, we would expect the *Philebus* to be close in doctrinal content to other later dialogues, but when making comparisons between the *Philebus* and other of Plato's works, two things need to be kept in mind. First, the context provided by the dialogue itself is of utmost importance. Commentators are especially eager to link the *Philebus* with the *Timaeus,*[38] but one should not assume without further investigation that the complete cosmology of the *Timaeus* is lurking in the background of the ontology of the *Philebus*. For although the basic point that the world is ordered is the same in both dialogues, we have no reason to ascribe close parallels between them because the overall purpose of the two dialogues is different. The *Timaeus* is a "likely story" about how the physical cosmos came to be as it is, while the ontology or cosmology of the *Philebus,* as we shall see, is introduced as part of the argument that intelligence is superior to pleasure.

Second, although e.g. the methodology of the *Sophist* is probably relevant to the *Philebus,* does the conclusion necessarily follow that it is more relevant than a point made in the *Republic?* Those who answer affirmatively often do so because they assume revisionism to be true. How one stands on this issue can determine the general tenor of one's interpretation of any dialogue, since no one work can be understood completely without considering at least in general how it fits into the whole Platonic corpus.

To me, the *Philebus* stands as a watershed work. As a later dialogue it is concerned with the "puzzles" *(aporiai)* raised in the *Parmenides* and employs a method that, as I shall argue, is essentially the same as that of Collection and Division which was introduced in the *Phaedrus*. On the other hand, it also focuses on the theme of the good life prevalent in dialogues such as the *Gorgias* and *Republic*. In fact, as we shall see in the classifications of

pleasure and knowledge and in the final ranking according to the Good, the *Philebus* is in some ways very reminiscent of the *Republic* in both content and style.

Continuity between the *Republic* and the *Philebus* should not be surprising given the fact that the purpose of both dialogues is to show that the life ruled by reason and intelligence is best because it is most attuned to the basic structure of reality. Hence we find in the *Republic* the insistence that any account of virtue without the Good is incomplete because it is in relation to the Good that just actions and all other things become beneficial (505A–B). So knowledge of what is truly good or worthy of choice is crucial if we are to live the good life. The mark of the philosophers is that they have ability to distinguish reality from appearance by "looking" to the Good as a model *(paradeigma)* for the proper ordering of their own souls, the *polis,* and its citizens (540B; cf. 506A–B). The idea of the Good as the model of order is the key to understanding why knowledge of the Good is the highest and most valuable study. For the Good is the cause of the structure of the world of the Forms, which in turn cause the sensible realm to be what it is. The details of this causality are, of course, notoriously difficult to make out, especially in regard to the role of the Good in the world of the Forms. For my purposes, though, suffice it to say that Plato is suggesting that in order to know the true value of anything, one must know its proper place in the whole order of reality, for which the Good is the model.[39]

I shall argue that, likewise in the *Philebus,* one must know the basic structure of reality encompassed by the Good in order to rank and arrange correctly the types of knowledge and pleasure that constitute the good, mixed life. Of particular importance in this task are three aspects of the Good: Truth (which also played a special role in the Sun Analogy), Proportion, and Beauty. Through these three the Good causes the mixture to be what it is (a well-integrated mixture as opposed to a jumbled heap) and to be good. In fact, suggestions are made in the text that the Good directly determines the world of the Forms which in turn is ontologically independent of, and responsible for, the reality and value of the sensible realm. Again, the details of the ontology are sketchy, but here, as in the *Republic,* Plato admits to being able to describe the Good only by giving a sketch or outline of it. Even so, that the Good is the cause of the order of reality, and that the Forms are dependent upon it rather than on their sensible instances, is fairly clear. Thus the Forms retain both the ontological and the evaluative priority they were accorded in the *Republic.*

The main difference between the two dialogues is that in the later work Plato applies the emphasis on the interrelations among Forms, prevalent in the *Sophist* and *Statesman,* to the question of how pleasure and knowledge

should be included in the good life. Part of this emphasis involves the recommendation of the Divine Method, which is grounded on an intuitive sense of the unity of Forms, *nous,* and which also enables one to realize, in both thought and action, the unity (oneness) found amid the plurality which pervades our experience. By using the Divine Method, we realize how to rank the different types of pleasure and knowledge that form the good life. Hence the *Philebus* goes much further than does the *Republic* in clarifying how we may achieve the best life by properly embodying the universal Good within the human realm.

Although my purpose is not to present conclusive evidence that my interpretation of the *Philebus* is the only plausible one, I do present a *prima facie* case for it by showing how the ontological, methodological/epistemological, and ethical aspects of the dialogue can be integrated if my interpretation is adopted. In this sense, my work is the mirror image of that of Roger Shiner, who in his monograph *Knowledge and Reality in Plato's Philebus* (1974) presents a *prima facie* case for a revisionist reading.[40] As with the case of Gosling and Sayre, however, his interpretation brings coherence at the price of major omissions. Not only does he fail to address the ethical issues of the *Philebus,* he also neglects the "Four Kinds" passage which is one of the most ostensibly ontological passages in the dialogue.

A more systematic revisionist reading of the *Philebus* is provided by Henry Teloh in his book, *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics* (1984). Teloh claims that the objects of Collection and Division—pleasure, knowledge, the good life, and the monads (Ox, Human, Beauty, and the Good), as well as the *meikton*—are kinds grounded in phenomena and thus not separate Forms. Furthermore, *peras, apeiron,* and *nous* cannot be transcendent Forms, since as principles used to explain the cosmos, they must be within it.[41]

Since this is not the place to review the passages Teloh cites in support of his interpretation (I shall note them while providing an alternative reading in my own analysis), I shall confine myself instead to a few brief remarks about Teloh's general approach to the *Philebus*. By attributing to Plato an ontology of kinds, much like (if not identical to) contemporary notions of natural kinds, significant links between the ontological, methodological, epistemological, and ethical dimensions of the dialogue are lost. According to W. V. O. Quine,[42] whom Teloh cites, kinds are sets which are determined by their members. Applying this to the *Philebus* would mean that the kinds are collections of sensible individuals and thus are not separate or transcendent. This also means that the kinds are reductionist in a sense; the individuals determine the kinds rather than *vice versa*. As I have mentioned briefly above and shall develop in more detail in my analysis, Plato's

discussion of true and false pleasures and his singling out of the dialectic as the highest type of knowledge cannot be understood fully unless we realize that the standards to which he is appealing are grounded in ultimate reality. Plato's theory is holistic rather than reductionistic, for the Good determines the Forms which in turn determine both the sensible world as a whole and each individual within it. In this way, the Good secures the ontological and thus the epistemological and evaluative priority of the Forms which are its parts or aspects. Since Forms are fixed in the nature of things (and, consequently, provide something upon which to fix our thoughts and discourse), the physical cosmos is unintelligible apart from them. Thus Plato condemns in the *Philebus,* as he did in the *Republic,* the so-called naturalists *(physikoi)* who concern themselves only with "what has become, is becoming, and will become" and totally ignore "what always is" (59A–B).

I shall argue that "what always is", i.e. Being or the world of the Forms, is the object of true knowledge not only because it is immutable but also because it is pure and definite. For a complete understanding of reality, including the sensible realm, one must have knowledge of the Good as the cause of all and therefore as the explanatory first principle. Obviously, the order supplied by the Good is not only a great chain of being, but also a hierarchy of value. Plato's conception of reality suffused with being and goodness from above scarcely can be captured by the reductionistic natural kinds of the empirical sciences.[43]

To summarize, let me review my general approach to the *Philebus*. My main concern is to illuminate the overall argumentative/persuasive structure of the dialogue, by showing how the major ontological, methodological/epistemological, and ethical threads are interwoven throughout the text. In this way, major passages in the dialogue will be understood in terms of the context the rest of the dialogue provides. This context is of primary importance; however, when Plato presents in the *Philebus* an issue, e.g., false pleasures, which he has examined elsewhere, the dialogue(s) in which the other discussion appeared will also be brought to bear on the subject at hand regardless of chronology. I take the *Philebus* to be a watershed work, where the ontological, epistemological, and evaluative priority of the Forms evident particularly in the *Republic* is maintained, but combined with an emphasis on the interweaving of Forms that is also found in other late dialogues.

Thus the analysis of pleasure and knowledge presented in the *Philebus* can be understood fully only if placed in the context of the more general and fundamental question of how human life fits into the overall structure of reality. What guides the discussion of the good life throughout the dialogue is the conviction that we realize our human good only by shaping our lives so

that they are true to the universal Good which unites all things. The dialogue is structured around this crucial point. Although I shall note different readings—including revisionist ones—while presenting my own, refutation of other views is not my primary purpose. The true test of any interpretation is how well it reveals the essential coherence of the text without crucial omissions or excessive reliance on other works. According to my interpretation, the *Philebus* shows what it says: that if we delve deeply enough, we shall discover that behind the appearance of disorder lies proportion, beauty, and truth.

1

THE NATURE OF PLEASURE AND KNOWLEDGE: ONTOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS (11A–31A)

THE PUZZLES *(APORIAI)* OF ONE AND MANY (11A–15C)

As the dialogue opens, Socrates and Protarchus are arguing over which psychic state or condition promotes the good life, pleasure or knowledge. The hedonistic position that pleasure is the good for all living beings (11A) is one that Protarchus has taken over from "good-looking *[kalos]* Philebus" who has withdrawn from the discussion (11C). Philebus is represented as a dogmatic person who "shall always think that pleasure is the victor" (12A) and, after entrusting his position to Protarchus, washes his hands of the argument (12B). He will, as we shall see, break into the discussion later but usually just to complain that he does not understand (18A-D) or to protest against Socrates by either committing the fallacy of *tu quoque* (22C) or by complaining that the significance of intelligence is being overplayed (28B). The one time Philebus does try to enter the argument (at 27E), he plays into

Socrates' hands by admitting that pleasure is indefinite. Perhaps his close-minded attitudes and his lack of philosophical aptitude are meant to underscore the basic irrationality of his rather crude version of hedonism. At any rate, Socrates almost immediately points out a fundamental flaw in the position that pleasure is the good: the fact that there are many different, even opposing, forms of pleasure. Protarchus objects that although pleasures may arise from contrary sources, the pleasures themselves are not in opposition. After admitting that his own candidate—knowledge—is in the same position, Socrates gets Protarchus to withdraw his objection.

If one, like Taylor,[1] or Shorey et. al.,[2] considers the *Philebus* to be a treatise on ethics without ontological implications, then the question arises, why is the issue of the nature of pleasure treated so scantily here? Indeed, W. K. C. Guthrie and Gosling both object that Protarchus gives in to Socrates too easily. Gosling points out that Protarchus' position is similar to Hume's: pleasures are effects of other activities or experiences. Socrates, on the other hand, seems to think that pleasures are activities or experiences in themselves; hence the wise man's pleasure consists in his wisdom and is not just an effect of it. Because he makes a different assumption about pleasure than does Protarchus, Socrates never really refutes him.[3] Guthrie interprets Protarchus' position as being like that of the Cyrenaics, for whom pleasure is a subjective state only. Socrates, however, wants to differentiate pleasures according to their objects. Guthrie observes that this difference between them "is relevant to the later question of true and false pleasures, and it would have been interesting to have it thrashed out."[4] This issue is interesting to Guthrie and Gosling, but evidently not to Plato at this point since he does not "thrash it out" but instead turns his attention to the problem of the one and the many, which he apparently believes to be a more crucial issue. Perhaps nothing signifies so clearly Plato's genuine interest in metaphysics in the *Philebus* as his insistence here that the problem of opposing pleasures be addressed as just one case of a more general metaphysical issue. Plato does not think of the *aporiai*—and later, the four kinds—as constituting a digression from the ethical topic at hand. Instead, he seems to think there, as in the *Republic*, that in order to answer the question of the good life he must set it in a metaphysical context.

Exactly what is problematic about the relation between the one and the many? Socrates first makes clear what is *not* at issue. The question of how one sensible individual can be both large and small, is dismissed as being "childish and easy" (14D; cf. *Sophist* 251A–B; *Parmenides* 129A–B). Instead, the real problem is how ungenerated and imperishable monads such as Human, Ox, Beauty, and the Good are both one and many. To realize why the first version of the one-and-many problem is dismissed, while the second

is not, is important. The reason is not that the first is about sensibles, since part of the second version also involves sensibles or "things that come to be" (15B). Rather, the difference is *how* sensibles are treated in each case.

In the first or "easy" version, the problem is how, for instance, tree appears as one tree, yet has many branches, twigs, leaves, veins of leaves, pieces of bark, and so on (14D ff.; cf. *Republic* 524D–526C). When perception reports that the tree is both one and many, the mind is confronted with the apparently contradictory message that the same tree is identical with both unity and multiplicity and thus unity and multiplicity themselves are identical (cf. *Republic* 523A–524C and *Parmenides* 127D–130D). For Plato, the confusion can be resolved only by reference to non-perceptible objects, i.e., the Forms (see *Phaedo* 101Aff.). The tree is not identical with either Unity or Multiplicity but participates in these two separate Forms. In short, the first problem arises because of the failure to recognize that a Form exists in which the many sensibles called after it participate. This, of course, is the very foundation of the classical Theory of Forms. It enables us to distinguish between sensibles and Forms and between one Form and another. Thus we no longer think that because Simmias can be said to be both tall next to Socrates, and short compared to Phaedo, he is identical to both Tallness and Shortness with the result that both Tallness and Shortness are identical to each other. So if the Theory of Forms is true, then we can identify relations between a Form and its instances and between one Form and another.[5]

Nevertheless, the following question remains: what is the nature of these relations? The answer to this question has raised controversy, and in fact involves the following *aporiai:*

> Do these unities [or monads such as Human, Ox, Beauty, and the Good, 15A] truly exist? How can each of them—which is always the same and never admits of either generation or destruction—firmly be this one unity? Concerning the things that come to be—the indefinite—can we assume that the unity is dispersed and has become many, or can it be a whole and yet be separate from itself? But this appears to be the most impossible thing of all, that it [the unity] could be in the one and in the many at the same time. (15B)

Two main issues must be settled regarding this passage. First, how many questions are involved here, two or three? Second—and more importantly—are these questions raised about the Forms or sensibles or both? Perhaps we cannot decide whether two or three questions are involved here based on philological considerations alone.[6] The issue of structure cannot really be separated from that of content; the way one considers this passage to be

organized is fundamentally a function of the meaning one ascribes to it. Concerning this latter point, the main issue is how to interpret the monads. The text clearly tells us three things: they are ungenerated, each is to be considered a unit or "one," and they are such things as Human, Ox, the Beautiful, and the Good. These three suggestions alone strongly imply that the monads are Forms.[7] The context adds to this impression. Since the easy version of the one-and-many problem concerned Forms and their relation to sensibles, we might expect the serious version to have the same basic subject matter, but considered from a different perspective. This perspective is from the point of view of the essential unity of a Form rather than that of sensibles. In other words, if the solution to the easy version is correct, then there are Forms, i.e., ungenerated monads. But do these hypothesized monads exist outside the mind? If so, what are they like? How are they related to sensibles? These are the major puzzles posed in this passage.

Specifically, this passage includes three separate questions. Each admits of a number of interpretations, and I maintain that Plato meant to suggest different meanings for each of them. To capture these different meanings, the three questions can be subdivided (which I shall justify later). The *aporiai* can be organized as follows:

I. Do these monads or unities truly exist?
   A. Are they real entities, as opposed to mere thoughts?[8]
   B. Do they have true Being, i.e., do they enjoy a high ontological status?
II. How can each of these unities—being always the same and never admitting either generation or destruction—nevertheless firmly be this one unity?
   A. What are the relations between Forms as parts and Forms as wholes, including:
      1. Relations of Forms as parts to the more comprehensive Forms or pairs of Forms?
      2. Relations between Forms as parts within a whole?
III. Concerning the things that come to be—the indefinite *(apeiron)*—can we assume that the unity is dispersed and has become many, or can it be a whole and yet be separate from itself—being at the same time in the one and in the many?
   A. Does a unity disperse itself among its instances in the sensible world so that it is no longer a unity, but has become dissipated among its many instances?
   B. Does the unity separate itself into its many instances so that it is at the same time a unified one (Form) yet is in its instances in the sensible world?

Of course, the *aporiai* are stated ambiguously and are subject to numerous interpretations. The best available proof that the reading offered above is an adequate one is its coherence with the remainder of the dialogue. Given the fact that these puzzles are identified at 15C as those which "cause the greatest confusion if not well settled, and if well settled, cause the most agreement," Plato would most likely at least partially answer each of these questions somewhere in the dialogue. If this is true, then the answers he gives will indicate how he intended the questions to be understood. But this test, of course, can be applied only after considering—in very general terms—why Plato might pose these three questions, as interpreted here.

After introducing a metaphysical theory, the most natural question to ask is the following: does it accurately describe reality? For Plato, who in earlier dialogues (especially the *Republic*) always distinguished between different levels of reality, this question consists of two components. First, do the entities posited by the theory—i.e. the monads or Forms—exist independently of the mind? And secondly, if they so exist, to what level of reality do they belong? The first part of this question was raised in the *Parmenides* when Socrates, portrayed there as young and philosophically immature, conjectures that perhaps the Forms exist only as thoughts, and have no reality apart from our minds. Parmenides, of course, makes short shrift of this suggestion (132B–C) and ultimately reaffirms the central Platonic belief that the Forms must be assumed to exist independently of our minds if we are able to have knowledge or to think or communicate at all (134E–135C; cf. *Republic* 476B–480A, *Cratylus* 439E–440C). The mature Socrates of the *Philebus* makes a similar response at 15Dff., as we shall see shortly. My point here is that to question the real existence of the Forms is not without precedent in the dialogues.

Of course, the more important aspect of this question involves how the Forms exist: what is their ontological status? The answer to this question is crucial to understanding the ontology of the *Philebus*. If the Forms are no longer considered to be more real than sensibles, then the revisionist thesis is correct.

For Plato, the question of the ontological status of Forms was also raised in the *Parmenides,* where the youthful Socrates is perplexed over whether Forms exist for human, fire, and water, but is sure that hair, mud, and dirt are "just as we see them to be" (130D). In other words, young Socrates (who need not be identified with Plato himself) thinks that at least some sensibles can exist independently of Forms. But this implies that sensibles and Forms are on the same ontological level, at least in regard to ontological independence. This assumption leads many difficulties, including the dilemma of participation (131A–C), the paradox of divisibility (131C–E),

and the largeness regress (the so-called Third Man argument, 131E–132B). It finally leads to the unacceptable conclusion that the Forms are completely separate from sensibles and are therefore unknowable (133A–134E).[9] Thus in the *Parmenides,* the question of ontological status of both sensibles and Forms is raised. This dialogue suggests that the assumption that sensibles can exist independently of Forms is mistaken. But can the Forms exist apart from sensibles? This is the question the *Philebus* addresses.

The most difficult aspect of interpreting the second question is to make sense of the parenthetical remark that arises in its midst: μίαν ἑκάστην οὖσαν ἀεὶ τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ μήτε γένεσιν μήτε ὄλεθρον προσδεχομένην (15B).[10] This phrase must be accounted for and not simply ignored, as both Hackforth and Gosling have charged Archer-Hind with doing in this interpretation of the second question. Archer-Hind asserts that this question involves the relation of the Ideas to the supreme Idea of the Good, and ultimately, the systematic unity of all Forms.[11] Hackforth, on the other hand, contends that the parenthetical remark introduces into the second question the issue of how Forms are related to sensibles. Specifically, he considers the phrase, μήτε γένεσιν μήτε ὄλεθρον προσδεχομένην, to "bear on a Form's immanence in particulars."[12] Thus he collapses the second and third questions into one.

Gosling agrees with Hackforth that Archer-Hind's interpretation should be rejected because, on the latter's reading, the parenthetical comment about monads not admitting of generation or destruction would then be a red herring. In other words, if the question only involves Forms, as Archer-Hind suggests, then why mention that they are ungenerated and indestructible? On the other hand, Gosling—unlike Hackforth—believes that 15B involves three questions and not just two. Yet if this is the case, what is the problem that the second question raises? How is it that the ungenerated and indestructible nature of the monad calls into question its status as a unity? Gosling sees this as a problem but he cannot agree with Archer-Hind that only Forms are the subject of the second question, nor can he accept Hackforth's suggestion that this issue involves only two questions.[13]

I believe that 15B involves three questions and that Archer-Hind is right that the relations among the Forms themselves, including the unity of the Intelligible realm, are entailed by the second question.[14] No doubt Hackforth et. al. believe that the parenthetical remark refers to a Form's relation to its instances, because a Form is usually described by Plato as never coming into being or passing away, *in contrast to* the transient nature of sensibles. But the Forms are what they are quite apart from sensibles and so to conclude that Plato is speaking of the nature of Forms, considered independently of their relations with sensibles, is perfectly conceivable. Yet

if this is true, then the problem Gosling raised remains: what is the apparent contrast Plato is drawing between the Forms, which, on the one hand, are "always the same" (ungenerated and indestructible), and which, on the other hand, are unities? In what sense is the self-identity, immutability, and timelessness of a Form in conflict with its unity? Clearly no conflict would exist if what is meant by unit here is absolute simplicity. But if what Plato means by μίαν ταύτην (*this* one, 15B) is a whole of parts, then a conflict could occur between the Form as a whole and the parts of which it is composed.

To support this interpretation, refer to the broader context in which the *aporiai* appear, and recall the discussion which initially led Socrates to raise the one-and-many problem. Against Protarchus' contention that all pleasures are alike, Socrates points out that, on the contrary, pleasures not only differ from one another, but can even be in opposition (12C–E). The same holds true for knowledge (13D–14B). The source of difficulty in understanding how one thing—pleasure or knowledge—can at the same time have many different and even opposite forms is the problem of the one and the many, specifically, the one and the many problem as it involves the ungenerated monads. So the contrast Plato is drawing in the second question is between a Form as a self-identical, immutable, timeless, and unified entity on the one hand, and on the other, a Form which differs from, and even opposes, other Forms, including Forms which are its parts. In other words, the contrast is between the emphasis Plato put upon the simplicity and independence of a Form from everything else including other Forms, and the stress he is now (in the *Sophist* and *Statesman,* as well as in the *Philebus*) putting on the "weaving" or interrelations among the Forms.[15]

This contrast[16] can be seen best by comparing Socrates' reply to Protarchus at *Philebus* 12C–E to the *Meno*. In fact, this passage in the *Philebus* alludes to the *Meno* (see 74B–76A), since in both Socrates replies to his interlocutor by using the same illustrations: figure and color. But Socrates uses these examples to reply to quite different positions. Because Meno could not see that all the examples of *arete* he listed shared a common characteristic, Socrates' concern was to point out that there is one Form, *Arete,* that is "over" the many sensible manifestations of it. Protarchus, however, has the opposite problem; he insists that, e.g., all pleasures, as pleasures, are alike. So Socrates must stress that even if pleasure as a genus or kind is one, it can have many different and even opposing species or parts. Yet, exactly how any genus, Form, or monad can contain many, even opposite, parts, and yet still remain unified, is not clear. This is why Plato poses this question as a puzzle to be solved. The main problem is how a Form can be composed of different parts which may oppose each other. As a

result, this question is particularly important for the analysis of pleasure and knowledge where, especially in the case of pleasure, opposition is likely to be involved.

Of course, Plato is still interested in how Forms and sensibles are related, and he expresses this concern in the third question. Here Plato assumes that a Form and its sensible instances are related as the whole is to its parts. He analyzes this relation in the following way: either each part participates in its own part of the whole or each part participates in the whole Form, resulting in the Form becoming separate from itself. This analysis was first presented in the paradox of participation in the *Parmenides* (131A–131C). This is a genuine perplexity, since either disjunct leads to unacceptable consequences.[17] If each part participates in the whole of the Form, then the Form is not the same as itself; it would forfeit its self-identity. This would be "the most impossible thing of all" (15B), not only logically, but ontologically, since every Form is "the same as itself" (*Sophist* 254D). The assumption that each sensible has its own part of the Form is also unacceptable, although it appears to be merely false, not absurd. In the *Parmenides,* this assumption amounts to the denial of the universality, and thus the ontological priority, of Forms. If each sensible had its own part of the Form, that part would be unique to that sensible. And if this were the case, then the Form would depend upon the sensible in which it is substantiated for its existence and character. In short, we would have the complete reversal of standard Platonic ontology. We would find ourselves face to face with Aristotle, the mirror image of Plato.[18]

This last point is put slightly differently in the *Philebus*. The "dissipation" of a Form among its instances is said to cause that Form to become many. Taken literally, this would mean that the Form would no longer be a "one" over its many instances, but rather that it would simply *be* the sum of its instances. Once again, if the universality of Forms is denied, the distinction between a Form and its sensibles collapses. In sum, if the analysis of the whole-part relation between a Form and its instances presented in this third question is accurate, then the Forms lose either their self-identity or their universality. Obviously, both consequences are unacceptable.

We have now identified the three major sources of perplexity concerning one and many: the existence and ontological status of the Forms, their relations with each other, and their relations with sensibles. How might these *aporiai* be solved? Plato does not provide a complete or systematic answer, but he does, in the course of the dialogue, offer suggestions on how these *aporiai* should be approached. In the present context, though, keep in mind that the immediate concern is to deal with the one-and-many problem

as it applies to pleasure and knowledge. It is reasonable at this point to infer that since the *aporiai* are about the Forms and that the nature of pleasure and knowledge involve these puzzles, then the proper analysis of pleasure and knowledge also will involve Forms.

But this does not mean that both pleasure and knowledge themselves are Forms, only that the understanding of them *requires* Forms. This early discussion leaves open the question of the exact ontological status of pleasure and knowledge. At this point, we have no reason either to deny (as Henry Teloh does[19]) or to affirm that pleasure and knowledge themselves are Forms. As we shall see, pleasure will turn out not to refer to a single Form; but at this point in the dialogue its status is undetermined. Before its status can be determined, more needs to be said about the *aporiai* and how best to approach them.

THE PERENNIAL PRESENCE OF ONE AND MANY (15D–16B)

After stressing the significance of one and many (at 15C), Socrates notes its universal scope. One and many are perennially present in all our *logoi,* reasoning and discourse (15D). The two, in fact, become the same by virtue of our *logoi.* This is unavoidable, as the tendency to think this way constitutes "a condition within us" (πάθος ἐν ἡμῖν, 15D). Two problems in understanding this passage immediately arise. What does Plato mean by saying that one and many become "the same" (ταὐτόν) in our *logoi,* and what are we to make of this fact?

In answering the first question, we must consider the broader context of Plato's theory of meaning. If the subject matter of the *aporiai* is the Theory of Forms, then we may safely assume that the one and many in question in the present passage involve both relations among the Forms and between the Forms and sensibles. Now in what sense does Plato think that a Form becomes the "same" as both other Forms and as sensibles in our reasoning and discourse? Recall the statement in the *Phaedo* that "Each of the Forms exists, and because these other things have a share in them, they are named after them" (102B). Similarly, at 104A, the Three is called not only by its own name, but also by the name "the Odd" "because it can never be separated from the Odd" (104A). In the first case, a Form and its instances are called by the same name and in the second, one Form is called by the name of another, more comprehensive, Form. In both cases, the entity that is "called after" another derives its name from a being upon which it is ontologically dependent, much like a child takes on the name of its parents. The child's name identifies him or her with those directly responsible for his

or her existence and nature. Although the same surname applies to both the parents and offspring, it is clear that the relationship between the two groups is an asymmetrical one: parents are ontologically prior to their children and this remains the case whether the children are infants or adults. So a Form like Oddness is ontologically prior to both its instances (totally dependent young children) and its constituent Forms of Threeness, Fiveness, etc., which can substantiate Oddness by virtue of being substantiated themselves by sensibles (as adult children can pass on the nature of their parents to their own offspring).

Of course, the nature of the relations of Oddness either to its sensible instances or to Threeness, Fiveness, etc., is unspecified. But that is not the point, since at this stage in the *Philebus* the nature of these relations are at the root of the *aporiai* which still await solution. All we need understand at the moment is how one and many can be said to be the same in all our *logoi*. In this context, a comprehensive Form like Oddness may be said to be one both in relation to its sensible instances and to the Forms of Threeness, etc. which are its parts. It is "the same" as both insofar as it shares its name with both because it is ontologically prior to them. Of course, the level of ontological derivation is quite different in the case of an instance of Threeness than it is in the case of Threeness itself but that difference is not important for the present point. By calling both instances of Threeness and Threeness itself "odd" we indicate two things. First, oddness is a one which is over its many instances and also a unity composed of other Forms which are its parts. Secondly, Oddness as a one becomes the same as both its many instances and its parts in our thinking and discourse because the same name applies to Oddness itself, Threeness, Fiveness, etc., and to the latter's sensible instances. In other words, all uses of "odd" ultimately refer to the same Form, Oddness.

Why does Plato bring up the perennial presence of one and many in our *logoi* at this point in the *Philebus?* He does not do so—*contra* Taylor[20] and Shorey[21]—in order to condemn this feature of our thought and language.[22] For Socrates does not condemn (at 15B–16B) the fact that the one and the many are always present in our *logoi*, but rather he criticizes the way the young (and philosophically immature) misuse this fact. Plato draws attention to this point because it constitutes at least a partial justification for the existence of the Forms. If all terms ultimately derive their meanings by referring to the Forms, then Forms are the necessary objects of our thoughts and discourse (cf. *Parmenides* 134E–135C). Furthermore, since Plato assumes that language reflects reality, then we may infer that sensibles on their own are unstable and that to understand them we must refer to true Being, which functions as the sensible world's anchor. This, of course, is a

common theme in the middle dialogues, which, as we shall see, resounds in the *Philebus* as well. So in answer to the question whether the Forms exist, Plato reaffirms here his central belief that unless we assume that they do, we will have no basis for thought, language, or knowledge.

But just as Plato recognizes in the *Parmenides* that only someone of exceptional talents would be able to understand properly the theory of Forms (135A–B), so in the *Philebus* he warns against the misuse of one and many. He objects to the tendency either to "roll things up and knead them into one" or "unroll and divide them" (15E). Such a tendency leads to confusion both for the young people themselves and for all those whom they subject to this specious sort of reasoning. Protarchus, young himself, asks Socrates for a "better road" than this, one that will lead them to the goal of their present discussion (16B). In response, Socrates introduces the Divine Method.

THE DIVINE METHOD (16B–17A)

Two things should be noted about Socrates' introduction of the Divine Method. First, he describes it as a road he has always tried—although often unsuccessfully—to follow. This is not due to any ineptitude on Socrates' part, because the road itself, though easy to point out, is difficult to follow (16C). Secondly, Socrates recognizes that this method is of divine origin, a "gift of gods to men" (16C). The method derives from a fundamental ontological principle which describes "the way in which . . . things are arranged" (16D). This principle is the following: "all beings always said to exist come from one and many and have inherently within themselves definiteness and indefiniteness" (ὡς ἐξ ἑνὸς μὲν καὶ πολλῶν ὄντων τῶν ἀεὶ λεγομένων εἶναι, πέρας δὲ καὶ ἀπειρίαν ἐν αὑτοῖς σύμφυτον ἐχόντων, 16C). This passage is ambiguous. An alternative reading of *aei legomenon* could be "said to exist always"; thus Gisela Striker translates as: "those things which exist eternally are made up of one and many."[23] But as Gosling points out, this would restrict the subject matter of the passage to Forms; and yet, as we shall see, sensibles also will be included as "things always said to be."[24] At any rate, broader meaning seems more in keeping with the fact that this principle undergirds the Divine Method, which is noted for both its pervasiveness and obscurity.

The scope of the Divine Method is indeed broad, for it is responsible for "bringing to light everything that has been discovered in the domain of any skill *[techne]*" (16C). As we noted in the Introduction, Gosling takes this passage literally: the method purports to clarify only *technai* as productive skills as opposed to types of *episteme* or knowledge in general.

But the context suggests a broader meaning of what would apply to any uniquely human—as opposed to animal—activity, and especially to those activities most divine or god-like. The use of the word *techne* here is consistent with the suggestion of 16C that the Divine Method was "thrown down by the gods in a blaze of light from some Prometheus" since the mythic Titan is credited with giving us fire and wisdom in the crafts *entechnos sophia* (see *Protagoras* 320C–322D). (Keep in mind that the name "Prometheus" means "forethought.") The *technai* include religious rituals (since we share in the divine) as well the means for providing material necessities—shelter, clothing, and food—and language (*Protagoras* 322A). In the *Philebus,* as we shall see, Plato uses oral language as an illustration of the Divine Method. And as I shall demonstrate in my discussion of the four kinds, Plato credits the Cause with ensouling human bodies and giving them medicine and other devices, and also for implanting a kingly soul and intellectual intuition *(nous)* in Zeus (30B–D). This harks back to two different aspects of the Prometheus myth. The first is the Titan's bestowal of the *technai* which help humankind overcome its initial condition of utter helplessness. The second aspect concerns Prometheus' role in bringing about victory for the gods in their war against the other Titans and in the subsequent crowning of Zeus as King. Perhaps the reference at 30D to "kingly" Zeus (and the other gods) is meant to suggest that the Cause (which I shall suggest in Chapter Three should be identified with the Good) is a Promethean-like power at work in both the Intelligible world (the realm of the divine) and sensible world (the home of mortals). The Divine Method, then, is meant to impart god-like power to mortals. This is symbolized by Prometheus' gift of fire, which, having been stolen from the gods, brings enlightenment to humankind. So the Divine Method is divine not only because of its origins but also because of the lofty knowledge which it yields: the basic structure of reality. In Chapters Two and Three, this method will be identified with the dialectic, whose objects are ontologically, epistemologically and morally/aesthetically higher than, and prior to, *technai* and more practical types of cognition in general.

At this point in the dialogue, however, only a brief sketch of the Divine Method is offered. The general procedure recommended by the method may be summarized as follows:

1. Assume that all existent entities are from one and many and have inherent within them definiteness *(peras)* and indefiniteness *(apeiria).*
2. Assume one Form exists for everything.
3. Seek this one Form.
4. Seek for the two, etc., according to whatever type of Form is being

examined. Each original unity [Form] must be seen not simply as composed of one and the many and indefiniteness, but how many (parts or aspects) it is (has) must be made clear.

5. Let each unit pass unhindered into the indefinite *(to apeiron)*. (16D–E)

The first step is not really part of the Divine Method but is the assumption of a general ontological principle upon which the Method is based. The purpose of using the method is to reveal the true structure of reality. If one of the most fundamental principles at work in reality is the derivation of everything from one and many and the presence of *peras* and *apeiron* within them, then the picture produced by the method must include one and many, *peras* and *apeiron,* in proper relation to each other.

The last step is also not really a part of the method. One can recognize the existence of *apeiron* as an element in things, but not know its nature. For the *apeiron* of the sensible world cannot be known in isolation (17E). Only after what lies between the one and the *apeiron* has been fully accounted for may one let the unity pass into the *apeiron,* for at that point one knows all he or she can about that original unity. To put the *apeiron* immediately after the unity, to pass either too quickly or too slowly from the one to the many, is the error the so-called wise men of today commit, which is why they practice eristic rather than the dialectic (16E–17A).

The characterization of the Divine Method thus far is highly abstract; not surprisingly, very different interpretations of it have emerged.[25] Most commentators have tried to decode this passage in light of the illustrations that are offered subsequently (at 17A–18D), without first considering how the method has been described so far. Gosling assumes that the Prometheus mentioned at 16C should be identified with Pythagoras, so the method is Plato's response to the Pythagoreanism of the mathematician and hedonist, Eudoxus.[26] As noted in the Introduction, reliance on sources outside the Platonic corpus as an interpretative key is a risky practice and even Gosling himself admits that his speculation about Eudoxus is no more than "highly probable."[27] Since this passage contains indications that the allusions are to Plato's own works, to stay within the Platonic corpus seems more prudent. Note that at 16B Socrates describes the Divine Method as a road which he has "always loved" and tried to follow. This strongly suggests that the Divine Method is associated with some method described elsewhere in the dialogues. This suggestion is strengthened at 17A where Socrates refers to the method described here as "the dialectic." And, as I shall discuss in more detail later, he defines the dialectic as "that knowledge which has to do with Being (τὸ ὄν) and Reality (τὸ ὄντως) and that which is always the same (ταὐτὸν ἀεί (58A). The Divine Method is associated with the dialectic in that it has the Forms as its primary objects.

What Socrates says of the Divine Method in the *Philebus* is strikingly similar to what he says of Collection and Division in the *Phaedrus, Sophist,* and *Statesman*. Just as Socrates describes the Divine Method as one he has "always loved," so in the *Phaedrus,* he calls himself

> a lover of these divisions and collections, that I may gain the power to speak and to think [cf. *Philebus* 15D]; and whenever I deem another man able to discern an objective unity and plurality, I follow "in his footsteps where he leadeth as a god." [Cf. Divine Method as "gift from the gods."] .. . . It is those that have this ability whom for the present I call dialecticians. (266B)

In the *Sophist,* the philosopher must be able to distinguish between the Forms by means of the dialectic, "to be able to distinguish each by kind, to know in what way they commune (κοινωνεῖν) or do not commune" (253D).

Likewise, the practice of Division in the *Statesman* is said to consist of dividing each Form (258C) according to "a natural break" (διαφυὴν) in it (259D). Later, the Stranger and the young Socrates use weaving to serve as a paradigm for statesmanship and apply Collection and Division to the former in order to produce an adequate definition of it. Socrates then observes that the weaving together of diverse elements in order to produce a balanced product is really the essence of all *technai,* not just weaving wool or the "royal weaving of statesmanship." This point is made in connection with the discussion of the principle of the mean. The standard of the mean is that by which the greater and the less (excess and deficiency) are measured. Anyone practicing this sort of measurement should do the following:

> When one at first sees only the unity of many things, he must not give up until he sees all the differences in them in so far as they exist in Forms [ἐν εἴδεσι κεῖνται; cf. *Philebus* 12C–E]. And when diversities are seen, he must not be discouraged or stop until he has gathered into one circle of similarity related things and included them in some sort of kind in accordance to their essences [οὐσίαι]. (285B)

Finally, the Stranger considers the investigation of the statesman to be only one subject among many for which the previously mentioned method was prescribed.

> THE STRANGER: And now, what about our search for the statesman? Has it been undertaken for the sake of this subject or so that we may become better dialecticians concerning all subjects?

YOUNG SOCRATES: Clearly this is done for the sake of all [subjects]. (285D)

We may reasonably conclude from this that the methodology—including Collection and Division—described in the *Statesman* has universal application because it is based on the universal relations among Forms. The main point here is to call attention to the similarities between how the Divine Method has been described in the *Philebus* so far and how Collection and Division are spoken of in these other later dialogues. I am not claiming that the two methods are identical, but only that both Collection and Division, as well as the Divine Method, focus on the discovery of subdivisions within overall unity in order to make clear the basic structure of reality. Both Collection and Division and the Divine Method are associated with the dialectic, which is the *episteme* of how Forms or Kinds are related to each other. In discerning how they are related, which Forms combine and which do not (*Sophist* 251C–252E), Socrates warns us in the *Philebus* not to overemphasize either the similarities ("rolling things up") or the differences ("unrolling and dividing") between them (15E). He stresses the erroneous character of ignoring the different parts or divisions of the original unity (16E–17A), and offers a similar warning at *Statesman* 285A–B. How, then, can one avoid making mistakes in division? In the *Philebus,* as well as in the *Phaedrus, Sophist,* and *Statesman,* divisions must be made along natural (objectively real) lines. One must pay attention to the nature of the original unity, to how many parts or aspects it has (16D–E). The type of division one should make depends on the nature of the particular Form that is under investigation. Thus when Plato subsequently illustrates the Divine Method, we should not expect some rigid, mechanical procedure but one flexible enough to encompass many different types of Forms. This is, in fact, what he gives us.

Before turning to the illustrations of the Divine Method, a few words need to be said about how the dialectician knows how to divide up reality along natural lines. It is important to note that the *Phaedrus,* where the Collection and Division method is first introduced, also retains the mythology of the immortality and reincarnation of the soul which accompanies the Theory of Recollection in the *Phaedo*. In both dialogues, the disembodied soul directly encounters the Forms which embodied reason strives to recall and imitate. (See *Phaedrus* 245C–250C. *Timaeus* 41E–42D is strikingly similar to this *Phaedrus* passage, as Cornford has noted.[28]) Although no references are made in the *Philebus* to the Theory of Recollection, it is perhaps meant to be retained, at least in part, as the implicit assumption upon which the Divine Method rests. For some innate cognitive intuition of what the Forms are like would seem to be necessary in

order to ply the Method effectively. As we shall see in the classification of knowledge, part of the highest form, the dialectic, which is associated with the Divine Method, is referred to as *nous*. The activity of *nous* is *noesis*, the word used in the *Republic* to indicate the direct intellectual apprehension of the Forms, including the Good. So we have some textual evidence for thinking that intellectual intuition is needed to recognize the first principles of Plato's ontology.

Other implications of the mythology of the soul, however, should not be imported into the *Philebus*. In particular let us bar the suggestion that knowledge is based on a visual/tactile model: that the soul directly encounters the Forms, just as the eyes must be in the immediate presence of the sensible in order to take in its properties *via* the visual stream (*Timaeus* 45B–C). This visual/tactile model is at work in the discussions of the Theory of Recollection in both the *Phaedo* and *Phaedrus*, and is a general theme throughout the middle dialogues, as Henry Teloh has pointed out.[29] But such a model of knowledge suggests that its objects, the Forms, are simple absolutes with no parts, and certainly no opposing parts, since they must be seen all at once or grasped in their entirety. As we have seen, the *Philebus* by contrast is concerned with Forms that are wholes of parts, including parts in opposition to each other. Thus for the purposes of the *Philebus*, the visual/tactile model of knowledge will not do. Of course, Plato still sometimes uses visual and tactile language, such as the recommendation that we should "seek" (ζητεῖν) for the one Form, and if we have laid hold of it (μεταλάβωμεν), we should seek the two, etc. (16D). But on the whole, Plato uses an oral/auditory model where the examples are musical scales or the pronunciation of letters. With some qualification, I agree with Teloh that the *Philebus* employs what he calls the discursive model of knowledge: the comprehension of the interconnections of the Forms through *logoi*.[30] But keep in mind that although the method itself is discursive, it rests on a noetic or precognitive sense that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. This does not require the assumption that the source of such innate knowledge is direct contact with the Forms by the disembodied soul. Thus in the *Philebus*, Plato strives to describe an infallible, synoptic experience in terms other than those based on vision and touch. Thus we should not be surprised that the illustrations of the Divine Method are those of musical and linguistic sound.

Illustrations of the Divine Method (17A–18D)

Contemporary critics variously contend that the Divine Method applies to the sensible world alone or to the monads alone or to neither. Gosling,

Moravcsik, and Shiner represent these three positions respectively. Gosling denies any connection between the arts and sciences *(technai),* the dialectic, and the Forms in the *Philebus*. But such a denial is costly. It requires him to admit that the problem of one and many concerns the Forms, while denying that the method—heralded as a solution to this problem—applies to Forms. Gosling seems to think that Plato, at this stage in his thought, distinguishes between the problem of one and many in language and thought (15D) and any metaphysical ramifications this problem may have.[31] In other words, the puzzles of one and many are linguistic and conceptual, but not metaphysical. But, as noted before, Plato bases his theory of meaning upon the Theory of Forms in his earlier dialogues and the *Philebus* gives no indication that he departs from this practice.[32]

Furthermore, Gosling denies any connection between the Divine Method (or what he calls "the Heavenly Tradition") and Collection and Division. He does so by attempting to disassociate Socrates from the method recommended by the Tradition. Apparently, Gosling assumes that Collection and Division necessarily involves genus/species division and he correctly points out that the examples of linguistic sound *(phone)* and music do not illustrate such a method.[33] But why assume that Collection and Division must be limited to genus/species division?[34] Similarly, he assumes on his own interpretation that Plato has restricted *technai* to phenomena which can be analyzed in terms of limits on a continuum. But to impose such a restriction on Plato is necessary only if one assumes that he intends the Divine Method to be taken as a methodology that deals with only one type of one/many relation.

According to Moravcsik, the Divine Method concerns the analysis of subsets of Forms, consisting of abstract parts or elements, situated within the comprehension of systems of Forms rather than in part/whole relations. Apparently, Moravcsik considers whole/part relations to consist exclusively of genus/species ones. He takes the dialectic described in the *Philebus* simply to be an extended characterization of the method in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*[35] but also distinguishes between them in that the latter method focuses on division of the genus-differentia-species structure, whereas the former refers to the relation of determinables to determinates.[36] He does not suggest that both types of relations could be encompassed by a more general characterization of whole/part relations.

Moravcsik is right, of course, that the relations of determinates to a determinable—e.g., an indefinite collection of determinate shades of the determinable, Color—is quite different than the definition *via* differentiae of a species/genus relation.[37] But as he observes later,[38] Platonic genera and species are very different from Aristotelian ones—for Plato, the whole is

greater than the sum of its parts. Since this is the case, we would expect Platonic definitions to involve the mapping of parts within the whole that contains them, where the nature of the whole determines how its parts are related both to it and to each other.[39] How Forms are related to each other as wholes and parts includes at least four different types of relations, as mentioned at *Sophist* 253D. The two of interest here are the first and the fourth:

1 . . . one Form or Idea extending through many, each of which lie stretched out apart [ἑκάστου κειμένου χωρίς]
4 . . . many [Forms] lying stretched entirely apart, pushed apart [πολλὰς χωρὶς πάντῃ διωρισμένας]

The first is the one traditionally called a genus/species relation; e.g., between one comprehensive Form such as Oddness, and its parts or constituents, Threeness, Fiveness, etc.[40] The last is the relation of opposition or exclusion and includes the relation between opposites such as Hot and Cold which can be represented as opposite ends of a spectrum or continuum.[41] I shall consider the nature of these relations in more detail in my discussion of the four kinds. My point here is that whole/part relations are meant to include a variety of configurations among Forms, so the "system" of Forms Moravcsik finds in the *Philebus* is really just an elaboration of the Forms as part-whole complexes mentioned in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

According to Shiner, we have good reasons for believing that the Divine Method does not answer the *aporiai* raised at 15Bff. One of the *aporiai* raised involves how Forms are substantiated in sensibles. However, the ἄπειρα mentioned in the Divine Method, says Shiner, are not particulars at all but are *infimae species*. Furthermore, the method explains how to analyze generic concepts into progressively specific ones but does not deal with how these concepts are substantiated. Finally, the grammatical and musical examples of the Divine Method do not even suggest conceptual analysis and thus do not help us understand how to analyze Forms.[42] Shiner concludes as follows:

> Plato in that dialogue [the *Philebus*] still believes that his questions are relevant to the issue of the objectivity of knowledge, and that his former answers are wrong, but is not aware what other answer might be right. He continues to ask the questions, because he refuses to accept Nominalism and Subjectivism; for him, there must be some way of avoiding such a consequence. But what way escapes him.[43]

In other words, Shiner thinks that Plato—to use Vlastos' phrase—is "honestly perplexed".[44]

Surely, to charge Plato with confusion rather than to try to interpret these passages in a way which will reveal their coherence is too easy. Gosling, Moravcsik, and Shiner all have difficulty squaring Plato's description of the Divine Method with the illustrations of it that he provides, because they assume that the method can only be used to analyze genus/species relations, yet the illustrations involve relations that are not of this type.

But, as already noted, if one abandons the assumption that the method can apply to only one type of relation, then no inconsistency arises. The context of the dialogue strongly suggests that the method should be flexible enough to encompass relations among monads and their instances, and a variety of relations that hold among the monads themselves considered apart from their instances.

Of course, if the monads are Forms then the Divine Method is designed to answer the *aporiai* of how they are both one and many, i.e., how Forms relate to one another as wholes and parts and how they affect sensibles. The illustrations of this method should likewise involve these relations, and the examples Plato gives us are linguistic and musical sound. Whether these types of sound are simply related to Forms so that their analysis would employ the Divine Method is not clear. At first glance, to state that Sound is a Form would seem implausible. But considering the fact that Knowledge and Truth are advanced in the *Philebus* as candidates for membership in the Intelligible world, as we shall see, the candidacy of Sound seems at least as plausible. At any rate, to determine the ontological status of either Musical or Linguistic Sound is not crucial, for as long as each of them is related to Forms (e.g., as aspects of at least some of the four kinds), the Divine Method must be used to analyze them. Certainly Sound is a good illustration of the method since it has a conceptual or non-empirical aspect as well as a phenomenal one. This is exactly what we would expect of an example of how to analyze both relations among the Forms themselves and among Forms and their instances. With this in mind, I shall now turn to what Plato says of his illustrations.

Protarchus requests a clearer account of this method, and Socrates complies with the example of the letters of the alphabet, an illustration he considers to be clear (17A). Sound is one, although spoken by many of us, yet it is also infinite in number. Grammar is the knowledge of the number and nature of sounds (17B).

Since Socrates considers this illustration to be a clear one, I shall try to interpret it in the simplest way possible. The example is drawn from learning

to pronounce (not write) the letters of the alphabet. The contrast he draws is between sound both as one and as infinite in number. This contrast is made in connection with the fact that "sound passes through the mouth of each and all of us" (17B). What this apparently means is that the sounds that can be vocalized are infinite in number, yet they have a common bond between them that makes them one (cf. 18B–D, the story of Theuth, described at 38B as a continuation of the earlier alphabet illustration). This common bond is what grammar studies, the number of distinguishable linguistic sounds (mutes, vowels and semi-vowels) and the nature of each one. These sounds evidently form a continuum from the vowels to the mutes, with the semi-vowels in between. Waterfield notes that the Greek classification of letters was based on how much breath was needed to sound a particular letter; vowels took the most, mutes (our 'stops') took the least, with the semi-vowels (our nasals, sibilants and continuants) in between.[45] Seeing the letters as forming a continuum emphasizes the fact that one cannot learn to pronounce the letters in isolation from one another, but must do so by combining them. Thus the role of grammar is crucial in that it reveals the proper ways to unite the letters (18B–D). This last point will become more clear when Socrates returns to the alphabet example in his story of Theuth.

Socrates then presents what he takes to be the analogous case of musical sound. Musical sound is one, yet also three: Low and High, and Even Pitch, which is intermediate between them. The case of music is analogous with linguistic sound in that the knowledge of either requires more than just recognizing that each involves one and many. In the case of music, one must know the number and quality of the intervals, the limits of the intervals, and all combinations that result. As a musician in the tradition of "the men and the old" (the Pythagoreans), the rhythms and measures of the body corresponding to these sounds would also comprise the knowledge of music or harmonics (17C–D).

How are these two examples of sound analogous? If Waterfield is correct, then both linguistic and musical sound form continua. This interpretation is supported by the fact that when the same division of letters is made in the *Cratylus* Plato draws a parallel between this division and the division of musical sound into rhythms (423E–425A). We have no need to conclude from this, however, that the Divine Method can only be used to analyze continua. As previously stated, the overall context strongly suggests that the method is meant to encompass a variety of different types of relations. Since the Divine Method, like Collection and Division, is meant to include the analysis of relations among Forms, and since many different types of Forms exist, then the method must be flexible enough to apply to Forms whose parts are arranged in a variety of ways. The fact that the Divine

Method was introduced to help analyze the monads Ox, Human, Beauty, and the Good (15A) as well as knowledge and pleasure (13D–14B, 12E–13C) suggests that a very broad method is needed to cover such diverse objects.

At 17E Plato makes clear his intention to use the Divine Method to analyze any unity or monad in terms of its definite number:

> For when you have a grasp of them [one and many] in this way, then you have become wise in respect to this unity and so with any other entity. But the infinite plurality in each case makes you in every instance indefinite in thought and of no account . . . as one who never fixes his sight on the [definite] number of anything. (17E)

What lies between one and *apeiron* is the focus of the Divine Method, and this point is what the illustrations of the Method are supposed to emphasize. This is also true of the examples used in the *Sophist*. At *Sophist* 253A–B the examples of the alphabet and of music are used as illustrations of the communion of the Forms. Grammar and music—the *technai* that identify the proper ways that letters or pitches combine—are compared to the dialectic, which studies how Forms do and do not combine with each other.

When Plato returns to the alphabet illustration at *Philebus* 18A–D, he both reinforces this central point and demonstrates the expansive nature of the Divine Method. Just as one must not move too quickly from one to *apeiron*, so one must not turn the *apeiron* immediately to one. According to the "converse" (το ἐναντίον, 18A) aspect of the Method, one should start with *apeiron* and then "think of each number which possesses a certain plurality, and . . . end by going from the all to the one" (18A–B). Here we start with the *apeiron* of the perceptual world. Of course, one cannot "know" (in the sense of defining) sensibles; thus to identify this method with induction would be a mistake. Instead, one begins with *apeiron* in the sense that one acknowledges its presence in the sensible world.

Once again, Socrates turns to the alphabet to illustrate his method. This time he uses the myth of Theuth's discovery of letters. Theuth began with the observation that sound was *apeiron*. He then discovered the definite number of vowels, semi-vowels, and mutes, respectively, dividing letters (sounds) off from one another. He also recognized that none of the letters could be learned in isolation, and that the relations that unite the letters compose the single *techne* of grammar (18B–D).

It is important to realize that both Socrates and Philebus treat this example as another illustration of the Divine Method, and not of some independent procedure. After Philebus interrupts the conversation at 18A to

ask Socrates why he has introduced the Divine Method, the latter responds that he will answer that question after he has finished making his point about the subject at hand (18B): how one must pay attention to the definite number of anything in order to know it (17E). At the end of the Theuth story, Philebus says that he understands this last illustration more clearly than the earlier ones, as far as the reciprocal relations of one and many are concerned (18D). No one makes much of the fact that this last case reverses the order used in the first two.

No one, that is, in the *Philebus*. Commentators, however, are less content with this "oversight" than are Socrates and his interlocutors. Sayre, for example, thinks that only the first two cases can be accomplished by a dialectician. The task of proceeding from the *apeiron* of vocal sounds to the single Form, Sound, is a creative act that can be performed only by a god or godlike person who can impose the Limited upon the Unlimited. According to Sayre, the Theuth story foreshadows 23C–D where the Intelligent Cause, by imposing Limit upon the Unlimited, produces the Mixed Class.[46]

But the text does not even hint that the dialectician can only move from one to *apeiron* but not *vice versa*. On the contrary, it strongly suggests that both procedures are part of the Divine Method, which is identified as the Dialectic. Theuth is described as a "god or like a god" (18B) because the Divine Method itself is said to be "a gift of the gods." Likewise, Collection and Division, when introduced in the *Phaedrus*, is attributed to a person whose footsteps should be followed like a god's (266B). And in the *Sophist*, Theodorus and Socrates agree that the Stranger, if a genuine philosopher, would be god-like (216A–C). For Socrates to describe dialecticians or philosophers and their method as god-like, then, is not uncommon.

After all, the Divine Method has as its objective to provide god-like knowledge, that of the basic structure of reality. Although synoptic in scope and self-evident once understood, this knowledge does not come all at once but through the discursive steps of moving from one to many to indefiniteness, or *vice versa*. Nevertheless, the unity of the World of the Forms is an organic whole rather than an aggregate; the parts are not discrete units but elements that blend together to form syllables and musical scales. Indeed, in the case of letters, perhaps Plato is reminding us that in the *Theatetus* Socrates explicitly claimed that the syllable is a single entity with a character of its own which is different from the letters which comprise it; it is an example of a whole which is not just the aggregate of its parts (203E–204A). Considering linguistic and musical sound as continua underscores the continuity between the parts or aspects of the unit. So although the Divine Method may include relations other than those that can be understood in terms of continua, the examples of linguistic and musical

sound are the most appropriate illustrations for a method intended to provide knowledge of Being as differentiated but harmonious unity.

THE DIVINE METHOD AS AN APPROACH TO THE *APORIAI* (REVIEW: 15B–18D)

Earlier, I offered an interpretation of 15B and said that Plato's attempt to answer these *aporiai* would give the best clue about the exact nature of the questions. The section on the perennial presence of one and many can be considered to be at least a partial answer to the first (complex) question: do the monads truly exist? Are they real entities, as opposed to mere thoughts, and do they have true Being (high ontological status)? The monads must be assumed to exist in order for us to have knowledge and discourse. As the objects of our *logoi* they must be assumed to be mind independent since for Plato, states of cognition are defined in terms of their extra-mental objects (as described in the Divided Line in the *Republic*). The Divine Method reinforces the idea that a monad or Form must be a mind-independent entity of a high ontological order; it is one (and, assuming it has parts, a definite number or many) over its indefinite sensible instances. The Divine Method suggests that the Forms exist in that they order the sensible world and thus make it intelligible. In earlier dialogues, the epistemic superiority of the Forms over sensibles served as ground for assuming that the former were of a higher ontological order than the latter. Is such an assumption still at work in the *Philebus* as well? A definite answer to this question is not given until the discussion of the classification of knowledge, and the discussion of the Good, which I shall treat in Chapters Two and Three respectively. At this point, all that Plato has suggested is that the Forms do enjoy a high ontological status, but how high a level is not made clear until later in the dialogue.

I shall now consider how the Divine Method offers a way to answer the second and third questions raised at 15B. The Divine Method enables the dialectician to consider three ontological levels: one, many (or definite number), and *apeiron*. The level of the one involves considering a monad or Form as a unity (e.g., as a limited continuum with a structure, like musical or linguistic sound). The next level consists of the parts of a given unity. Note that Plato does not use a word for "part" there (although he does speak of Being as part *(moira)* of the Good at 54C). Instead, here he refers to "the many" as numbers or a definite number; this latter is, at 18Aff., described as that which "possesses a certain plurality." The contrast term to *"arithmon"* (number) is *apeiron,* meaning an infinite plurality or number (16D–E, 17E).

Since, at 15B, "the things that come to be" were characterized as being indefinitely numerous [ἐν τοῖς γιγνομένοις αὖ καὶ ἀπείροις], we can suppose that the infinite plurality or number refer to the infinite number of sensibles. So *definite* number refers to nonsensible entities which can be enumerated or divided from, or out of, the original unity or more comprehensive Form. These nonsensible entities are definite not only in the sense of being limited in number, but also in the sense of having a definable or identifiable nature which is intelligible. Again, the contrast is with the indefiniteness of sensibles, which, because they are infinite in number, cannot be enumerated and are thus unknowable (17E). Given the fact that Plato has in the past always contrasted Forms with sensibles, especially in terms of intelligibility, we would expect these definite numbers likewise to be Forms. Note that, given this context, the application of numerical terminology to the Theory of Forms is not suggestive of some elaborate mathematical theory (*contra* Sayre et. al.[47]). After all, Plato has often stressed in earlier dialogues the continuity of mathematics with both the higher-order Forms and with the sensible world. As we shall see, the classification of knowledge in the *Philebus* will stress such continuity in terms strikingly similar to his discussion of this theme in the *Republic*. For now, in the contrast between the limited and definite nature of the Form-parts and the infinity and indefiniteness of sensibles, the use of mathematical terminology can be seen as a convenient way to stress the role of the constitutive Forms as intermediates between more comprehensive Forms and sensibles.

In the illustrations of the Divine Method, relations among the Forms themselves are involved in two ways. First are the relations between Linguistic Sound and the Vowel Sounds or between Musical Sound and the High and the Low Pitch. These are relations between a comprehensive Form and its parts or constituent Forms themselves. These relations would include those among the Mutes and Vowel Sounds in the case of Linguistic Sound and between the High and the Low of Musical Sound. With these illustrations, Plato has already indicated how the dialectician would go about answering the second *aporia;* how a Form can be atemporal, immutable, and self-identical, and yet be a unity in the sense of a whole of parts as opposed to a completely simple entity. The key to this lies in discovering how Forms are related to each other, as parts to a whole and as parts within a whole.

Plato also suggests, in the "converse" procedure, that by concentrating on the numbers which possess definite plurality instead of on the infinite plurality of sensibles, one will come to know all that is possible to know about the sensible world. The latter, considered by itself, is *apeiron* (both infinitely numerous and indefinite in character) and thus completely

unintelligible. So, what one knows is the structure of the Forms upon which the physical world depends for its existence and character. In other words, although Forms exist as entities in themselves, they also classify, i.e., group together and characterize, sensibles.[48]

In the case of the Forms mentioned in the *Philebus*—Natural Kinds (Ox, Human), Activities or Experiences (Knowledge), and Moral/Aesthetic Standards (Beauty, the Good)—the logic of the relations among the Forms themselves and between their instances is the same.[49] The real relations that obtain between Forms are reflected in the relations of things in the sensible world, since the relations of sensibles are derived from the relations of parts and wholes in the world of the Forms. Thus, for example, if the Form Ox is a part of the more comprehensive Form Hoofed Animal, then we would expect the sensible ox to have hooves. If this is indeed the case, then Plato does not need to distinguish carefully between relations among a Form and its constituent Forms and those between a Form and its sensible instances.[50] The distinction between the two levels is, for his purpose here, irrelevant. If, while dividing Forms, we discover for example that Beauty is a part of the Good, then we may rest assured that insofar as anything in the sensible world is beautiful, it must also be good in respect to its beauty.

Given that the relations among Forms will tell us what we can know of the sensible world, how does this answer the third *aporia?* The third question presents two models of relations between Forms and sensibles: the first is that each sensible participates in its own part of the Form, and the second is that each sensible participates in the whole Form. As previously observed, Plato already made clear in the *Parmenides* that neither alternative is acceptable. What is less clear in the *Parmenides,* however, is the source of the trouble. Evidently, participation *(methexis)* should not be construed as a part/whole relation. But this does not necessarily mean that no part/whole relations are possible. Notice that the *Philebus* never uses the terminology of participation.[51] Nevertheless, one need not infer from this fact, as Moravcsik does, that particulars are of no concern in this dialogue.[52] Nor does this mean, as Teloh suggests, that the problem of participation is dissolved by substituting unseparate kinds for transcendent Forms.[53] Perhaps the avoidance of participation means that Plato is going to explore the alternative of causality. As we shall see, the Cause is responsible both for the kinds (*gene,* 23D, 27A–B) and the physical cosmos (26Eff.).

But right now Plato is concerned only with introducing a method which will enable us to focus on the various relations among the Forms and thus enable us to classify correctly both pleasure and knowledge. He will indicate what these relations are later and thus provide more complete answers to the *aporiai.*

THE DIVINE METHOD AND THE MIXED LIFE (18E–22C)

Even if the Divine Method does help solve the *aporiai* of one and many, Philebus and Protarchus fail to see how it is applicable to the question of whether knowledge or pleasure is more essential to the good life (18A-D). Philebus breaks his silence only to inquire about the relevance of the Divine Method. Socrates then reminds them that this question is only a specific instance of the more general problem of the one and the many: knowledge and pleasure are each one and also many. But if so, do Forms (εἴδη) exist of pleasure and of knowledge? If they do, how many exist and what is their nature (18E–19B)? Of course, Philebus and Protarchus cannot answer these questions. The latter then asks Socrates either to distinguish the Forms of pleasure and knowledge or, if he is willing and able, to clarify the discussion in some other way (20A).

Socrates opts for the latter alternative and reports a recollection of a conversation he heard long ago which decided that neither pleasure nor knowledge is the Good, but rather some third thing is. If this could be proven, then pleasure would be identical with the Good. Thus, we would need to distinguish between the forms of pleasure (20B–C).

The important question for my purpose is this: is Socrates' use of his "recollection" of the mixed life meant to indicate the inadequacy of the Divine Method in providing an analysis of pleasure and knowledge? In order to provide an answer, three issues need to be addressed: (1) why Socrates chooses to rely on a distant memory rather than analyze pleasure and knowledge himself; (2) why he suggests that such an analysis is unnecessary; and (3) why Plato introduces the idea of the Mixed Life here, instead of applying the Divine Method to pleasure and knowledge. I shall examine each of these issues in turn.

First, Socrates suggests initially that he and his interlocutors analyze pleasure and knowledge according to the Divine Method, and he even reminds them that unless they are able to do so, they will be of no use in anything (19B). Protarchus protests that he and the other young men there are unable to provide such an analysis, and gives Socrates the choice of either doing it himself or making the disputed point clear in some other way. Why, then, does Socrates choose the latter rather than the former? One answer has to do with the dramatic context of this passage. Consider what might have happened if Socrates had chosen to do the analysis himself. Given the fact that Philebus and Protarchus had difficulty following his illustrations of the Divine Method, they probably would not have been able to understand the application of the method to pleasure and knowledge any better. It is not uncommon for Socrates to try an alternative argument or method if his

interlocutor does not understand the first. In the *Meno,* for example, the title character demonstrates his failure to understand the Theory of Recollection when he asks Socrates to return to their original question of whether *arete* can be taught or is given by nature (86C–D). Socrates then is forced to adopt a method of hypothesis which eventually proves to be unsatisfactory.

In the case of the *Philebus,* danger signals indicate that the alternative argument based on Socrates' "recollection" of the mixed life will likewise prove to be inadequate. The mixed life, rather than pleasure or knowledge, as the good is represented by Socrates not as his own idea, but one heard long ago, and perhaps in a dream (20B). The uncertain source of this idea immediately arouses suspicion of its credibility. Furthermore, it is at most the conclusion of an argument, and not the argument itself. However, if it can be proven to be correct, then pleasure will no longer be the good and Socrates will not need to distinguish between its different forms. But, as it turns out, all that is subsequently "proven" is that Protarchus would prefer a life that includes both pleasure and knowledge to one that consisted exclusively of one or the other (20E–22D). This, of course, does not establish that the mixed life which includes both pleasures and knowledge is superior to one that consists exclusively of one or the other.[54] Nor does it prove that the mixed life is identical to the good. This "argument" also does not answer the question of which is more essential to the good life, pleasure or knowledge.

In order to answer this question, other weapons are needed, including some they had already used (23B), like the Divine Method. The Divine Method will be applied to divide the *cosmos* into four kinds *(gene)* which in turn will be used in the classifications of both pleasure and knowledge. In the case of pleasure, however, the Divine Method can only be used indirectly since pleasure is so multifarious that a straightforward application of the method is impossible. In other words, the sensible experiences of pleasure are so diverse, especially since false and true pleasures are irreconcilably opposed, that they cannot be united under a single Form[55] but instead must be analyzed according to more general kinds: the indefinite, the definite, and the mixture of the two.

The last question to ask about this passage is, why does Plato bring up the idea of the mixed life here? For one thing, the passage looks both backward to the ethical discussion that began the dialogue before ontological considerations were introduced, and forward to when the relation of the good life to the Form of the Good will be revealed. Concerning the former point, Socrates had hinted at 11D–12A that something might be better than either the life of pleasure or of knowledge.[56] In this present passage he develops this point. More importantly, this section prepares the way for the later discussion of the Good itself (61Aff). Here Plato reminds us that the Good is

the most complete, self-sufficient entity and thus everything else pursues it (20D). The Good itself turns out to be the cause of the good mixture of the good life. But this cannot be fully understood until the nature of the Cause and its relation to the Good is explained in the four kinds passage.

The four kinds (22D–31A)

Both the principle that one and many are found in everything and the Divine Method which is founded upon this principle were first introduced in general terms. Socrates now needs to show how these ideas can settle the question of whether pleasure or knowledge is the cause (*aitia,* 22D) of the good life or is closely related and resembles it (22D). But instead of analyzing the forms of pleasure and knowledge directly (which his interlocutors would not be able to follow yet) he divides all things now in existence into four kinds and subsequently classifies pleasure and knowledge under these kinds. I shall examine closely how he goes about accomplishing this task.

Socrates begins by dividing everything that exists into three divisions. To do this, he takes the division between the definite and the indefinite established earlier and then combines these to form the third kind, the mixture of the definite and indefinite. Having done this, Socrates calls himself "a foolish man, dividing and enumerating according to the Forms." When Protarchus asks why he said this, Socrates replies that a fourth kind is needed, the cause of the combination of the first two.

The first major issue that needs to be addressed here is whether these kinds encompass all of reality. The answer depends upon what one means by "encompass." We have no apparent reason to take Socrates at his word when he says he is dividing everything that exists. "Everything" includes the Forms since they too "exist" (or, to be more precise, "are Being") in the sense that they are responsible for the existence and structure of the sensible world. I take the "now" (νῦν) of the phrase, "everything that now exists is in the all" (πάντα τὰ νῦν ὄντα ἐν τῷ παντί, 23C) to be inclusive, to include Forms, which as immutable and eternal can be said in a sense to exist in the present, in the now. But just because Socrates is dividing all of reality does not mean that the four kinds he settles on are the only ones possible. Other kinds, while not needed to encompass more of the whole, might nevertheless shed light on other aspects of it. In other words, division is made here—as it is in other later dialogues—according to the Forms (23C), but within this general context, the divisions are made in accordance with what is appropriate to the subject at hand. For example, because the task is to define

the sophist and statesman respectively in the dialogues of those names, two different sets of divisions or categorical schemes result. In the *Philebus,* the concern is with those fundamental kinds which would enable Socrates and Protarchus to decide whether pleasure or knowledge is more responsible for, or more like, the good life. They need not consider every fundamental kind, such as the five greatest kinds *(megista gene)* of the *Sophist* (Rest, Motion, the Same, Difference, and Being) because these would not shed light on the subject at hand. Three of the four kinds—the indefinite, the definite, and the mixture—figure prominently in the classification of pleasure, while the fourth kind, the cause, is used to explain what makes the good mixed life good. The four kinds turn out to be the classifications that are particularly useful in the analysis of pleasure and knowledge and the roles they play in the good life.

This point is important to keep in mind, for it helps explain why Plato's discussion of each kind is so maddeningly sketchy. As previously seen, attempts to apply the Divine Method directly to pleasure and knowledge have been forestalled. The four kinds are the 'new weapons' which Socrates will use to supplement (not replace) the older ones (the Divine Method, see 23B). For the purpose of carefully dissecting the ontological puzzles of one and many, the four kinds may seem to be crude instruments. But we must remember that Socrates is not performing a delicate operation, but rather intends simply to knock pleasure out of the competition. We should not expect fine distinctions in this discussion, but should just trace the general outlines of this passage with an eye to both what has gone before (the *aporiai* and the Divine Method) and what is to come (the classifications of pleasure and knowledge).

There are, in fact, indications in this passage that the use of the Divine Method here is limited to what would shed the most light on the issue of the relative importance of pleasure *vs.* knowledge for the good life. Socrates hesitates over how many divisions to make. He initially suggests a twofold division since the god has already revealed the indefinite and definite of all beings (23C). The dyadic division was explicitly recommended at *Statesman* 262E; and in the *Sophist,* all things in the sensible world are divided between being at rest or in motion (250D). Little wonder, then, that Socrates in the *Philebus* might wish to begin this way. Before he even makes the division, however, he decides to add a third, and no sooner does he say this than he decides that a fourth is needed. Because he keeps making more divisions, he calls himself "foolish" *in regard to* (not because of) the process of dividing according to the Forms (23D).[57] In other words, he is criticizing himself for not at first realizing how many divisions to make. When Protarchus suggests a fifth kind of division, Socrates does not completely reject it, but instead

suggests that since they don't need it at present they should not use it, though he leaves open the possibility that he may need it later (23D–E). All these instances illustrate the point that many accurate divisions (those that are made according to the real relations between the Forms) are possible, but only some are relevant to the task at hand.

Socrates next attends to each of the kinds in turn. According to the basic assumption of the Divine Method, he takes as his starting point the fact that each kind is both one and many. The task at hand, then, is to show how they are such. This will include collecting the many which are "split up and scattered" into one (23E).

Socrates first considers the indefinite, and how it is many (24A). He considers the example of the Hotter and Colder and decides that they have no limit *(peras)* or end *(telos)* and thus are completely indeterminate. This is because the More and the Less dwell within these kinds themselves (τὸ μᾶλλόν τε καὶ ἧττον ἐν αὐτοῖς οἰκοῦντε τοῖς γένεσιν, 24A–B) and prevent an end from coming about. Otherwise, the More and the Less would be ended themselves. The same is true of the Strongly and Mildly which create the More and the Less in any activity and do away with quantity *(poson)*. If definite quantity or due measure *(metrion)* replaced the More and the Less and the Strongly and the Mildly, these latter would be banished from their proper place. They would be neither Hotter nor Colder if they would receive quantity since these latter always go forth while the quantity has stopped going forth. As a result, both the Hotter and the Colder are indefinite (24A–D).

The details of this passage are, needless to say, obscure. The general idea seems to be that continua such as the Hotter and the Colder are indefinite when considered as ranges of undifferentiated qualities, like the More and the Less or the Strongly and the Mildly. Here "quality" *(poson)* is probably meant to be taken in a very wide sense as any attribute. For (as we shall see in Chapter Two) when pleasure is classified as being *apeiron*, this means that it is infinite in intensity and magnitude (45D). Thus one might say of such a pleasure that it is more or less both pleasant and painful in its degree, intensity (strength or mildness), etc. The rather strange talk about the More and the Less and the Strongly and the Mildly "dwelling in" (ἐν αὐτοῖς οἰκοῦντε, 24B) the Hotter and the Colder is meant to point out that continua are *apeira* not merely in the absence of any definite quality or due measure, but because of the presence of indefinite qualities or attributes. In fact, the presence of such indefiniteness is the mark of belonging to the class of *Apeiron* and being "stamped" with its single nature (24E–25A). So some continua are *inherently* indefinite, and are not, as it were, just waiting around for limits to be imposed upon them. (Continua which do accept limit are not

apeira but rather *meikta,* mixtures.) This point is significant later on in the classification of pleasure since those pleasures that are inherently indefinite end up being barred from the good life.

So *"apeiron"* names a distinct class of indistinct things: those continua which are inherently indefinite. As actual phenomena, these continua cannot be known (see 17E), but one can know them as members of the class. The class itself, *"to Apeiron,"* is said to have a single nature which it 'stamps' upon its members. As such, it is the source of the indefiniteness of actual sensible continua *via* the indefinite ranges of the More and the Less and the Strongly and the Mildly. Exactly how *to Apeiron* does this Plato never says. Some commentators, including Sayre, Jackson, and Teloh, have argued that the *apeiron* is analogous to Aristotelian matter, the substratum that underlies qualities, and Sayre and Jackson have identified the *apeiron* with the receptacle of the *Timaeus*.[58] But space or the receptacle is Plato's analogue to matter, an analogue that stresses the fact that sensibles are not substances as are Aristotle's form/matter complexes. And the *Apeiron* is not the receptacle since it has a single nature which it "impresses" on all it encompasses while the receptacle is completely characterless and indeterminate.

Although the details of Plato's account of the *apeiron* are indeed elusive, this does not mean that the Indefinite does not have some sort of definitive aspect to it. After all, if *everything* is made up of one and the many and has within it *peras* and *apeiria* (16C), then this would apply even to the *apeiron*. Since the Divine Method is supposed to illuminate how something is both one and many, and this method is being used in distinguishing the four kinds, then we would expect the one/many analysis to be applied to the *apeiron* as well.[59] As a class, the *apeiron* would serve as the one for both its many ranges of indefinite attributes and for the continua which could embody these indefinite qualities. The former "many" is at last numerically definite since it would have a limited number of such ranges, while the latter "many" is completely indefinite. A given continuum, although unknowable as an infinitely divisible continuum could be identified by reference to the particular ranges it embodies. For example, the experiences of both the sadomasochist and the profligate involve the continuum of pleasure and pain but the two differ according to the specific ranges that each embodies. The sadomasochist's pleasure is not just excessive in number and intensity (as is the profligate's) but also in the way it is experienced. For the sadomasochist, pleasure and pain are identical, while for the profligate, they are mixed together but not identical. Thus as an actual experience, the sadomasochist's pleasure cannot be understood because the pleasure and the pain involved cannot be distinguished from each other. But this general *type* of pleasure can be analyzed by identifying the indefinite attributes it embodies.

In contrast to the Indefinite is the Definite, considered as a general kind of work among both other Forms and sensibles. To this kind belong those things that do not admit of the More and the Less, but of what is opposite to them. These include first, Equality and the Equal, then the Double and all ratios, number to number or measure to measure (25A–B). Since Socrates does not consider the collection of these many until later (25D), first consider what these many are. What he lists is a series of ratios: the Equal (1:1), then the Double (2:1) and all the rest that can be expressed as number to number or measure to measure. These I take to be Mathematical Forms because later in the dialogue, the objects of the true or pure pleasures—the Straight Line, the Circle, Plane and Solid Figures (51B–D)—are said to be members of the kind of the measured (γένους . . . τῶν ἐμμέτρων, 52C–D). The beauty of these is not relative, but absolute. The fact that these objects are Forms is strongly suggested at 62A where Plato speaks of the "divine" as opposed to the "human" circle and sphere. The knowledge of these "divine" objects was spoken of earlier as philosophical (as opposed to practical) geometry and calculation (*logistika*) at 56E–57A. There is also philosophical arithmetic, which deals with equal and uniform monads (56D–E). These monads also appear to be Forms, since the superiority of philosophical arithmetic to the practical variety is ultimately founded upon the superiority of the objects of dialectical knowledge as a whole to *techne* in general (57B, 58C, 59A–C). This is because the object of *techne*, Becoming, exists for the sake of Being, which is the object of the dialectic (54C–D). These passages I shall discuss in more detail in connection with the classification of knowledge in Chapter Two.

So far, the many of the Definite Kind have not been collected and "stamped" with a single nature except negatively; whatever does not admit of the More and the Less belongs to *Peras*. At 26E, Socrates identifies this kind as "whatever stops the differences between opposites and makes them commensurable and harmonious by introducing number." Here, not only do members of the Definite refuse to admit of indeterminacy, they bring harmony to the Indefinite, when mixed with it. By examining these mixtures, Socrates says that the nature of the Definite will emerge more clearly (25D).

The right combination of the indefinite and the definite will produce health instead of illness, music out of an indefinite range of high and low, quick and slow; fair weather out of wintry cold and stifling heat, and many other physical and psychic benefits (15E–C). The right combination (ὀρθὴ κοινωνία) of the indefinite and definite produces "all beautiful things" (26B). The role of the definite is to introduce limit or measure to the indefinite, but this does not necessarily mean the mixture that results is good. At 26D, Socrates says that members of the third class include all

combinations or offspring of the indefinite and definite, not just "right" combinations (cf. 27D). This makes sense when considering the proximity that a series of tones could be limited or measured, but yet not be music. This interpretation would also allow the *meikton* kind to include not only Forms such as Health and Beauty (cf. *Phaedo* 65A), but also the states of human and the sensible world. The reason ideal or right combinations are emphasized here is because this is the appropriate feature which enables Socrates to identify the *meikton* as the kind to which the good (mixed) life belongs (27D). Perhaps also the ideal States or Mixtures are the intermediate Forms and as such are the central focus of the Divine Method. All other combinations would make up the indefinite sensible multitude while the one, although not mentioned, would be the comprehensive Form, Mixture.

The last kind that Socrates and Protarchus investigate is the cause (*aitia*). They first agree that it is necessary for all that comes to be to do so through a cause (26E; cf. *Timaeus* 28A–C). Next, they decide that the cause and the creator are the same and what is created and what comes into being are likewise the same. Furthermore, the nature of the former is to lead and the latter to follow. The cause is not the same as that which is "slave." Its "slave" is that out of which the created things come, the indefinite and the definite. The generated things are the Mixed class; they are generated out of the indefinite and definite. The cause of this mixture and of creation is the fourth kind (26E–27C).

A word needs to be said about what type of generation (*génesis*) the Cause engenders. *Aitia* is, of course, responsible for bringing the *apeiron* and *peras* together and producing *meikta*. But we have no need to conclude from this that the *meikton* is made up of only sensibles. The *génesis eis ousian* of the *meikton* (26D; cf. 27A–B) is likely to be only metaphorical.[6] This view is strengthened by the fact that *aitia* is said at 27B to produce (*apergazetai*) all three kinds, not just *meikton*, and at 30E, it is called the cause of all. So the type of *aitia* depicted in this passage is not exclusively, or even primarily, efficient causality.[7] Of course, the Cause is responsible for sensibles coming to be what they are as they "strive" to substantiate the Forms; in this sense, efficient, formal, and final causes all converge. And although the Cause is likewise responsible for the Forms being what they are, we need not suppose that it literally brings the Forms into being since they *are* Being; they are ontologically independent, atemporal, aspatial, etc. This point shall be elaborated when the relation of *aitia* to *nous* is discussed later.

At this point, though, Socrates has said just enough to distinguish *aitia* from the other three kinds, and he is now ready to address the relation of pleasure and knowledge to the good life. Having already decided that the mixed life is the best, they now assign it to the *meikton*. When considering

where to place the life of unmixed pleasure, Socrates asks Philebus whether pleasure and pain have a limit or admit of the More and the Less. Philebus emphatically answers that the latter alternative must be the case or pleasure would not be all good.

Socrates answers that if this were true—if the indefinite nature of pleasure were what made it good—then pain would not be all bad. Thus something other than the indefinite must be responsible for the good aspect of pleasure. Philebus has been caught off guard and once again has displayed his philosophical ineptitude. Socrates then says, "These I grant you are in this kind of the indefinite" (28A). The Oxford text reads τούτω δή σοι τῶν ἀπεράντων γε γένους ἔστων, although the manuscripts have τούτων . . . γένους ἔστων, which is untranslatable. But even following the Oxford text, the referents of τούτω and ἀπεράντων are ambiguous, as Gosling points out. The former can refer to pleasure and pain and the latter to the fact that they are *apeira;* or the former could indicate the two questions about the good and evil of pleasure and pain while the latter means "undetermined" in the sense of being unsettled.[63] I take the former reading because, at 31A, Socrates says that they showed what kind pleasure belongs to some time ago. Since 28A is the first and last place this point is brought up before 31A, Socrates was probably referring to pleasure and pain, characterizing them as *apeira*. In any case, pleasure itself is again said to be *apeiron* at 31A.

At this point, though, the discussion shifts away from pleasure to classifying practical reasoning *(phronesis),* knowledge *(episteme),* and intellectual intuition *(nous)*. Henceforth, I shall use the Greek terms *nous* and *phronesis* since they are less clumsy than the English. Socrates sets out to prove that these types of cognition belong to the *aitia*. He begins by offering Protarchus alternative world views: either the cosmos is governed by an irrational and random power and by chance, or—as wise men agree—it is ordered and directed by "some marvelous *nous* and *phronesis*" (νοῦν καὶ φρόνησίν τινα θαυμαστὴν, 28D). Protarchus assents to the latter. Socrates then observes that each of the elements (e.g., fire) is both in us and in the physical universe as a whole. And all of these elements compose a body, resulting in a cosmic body as well as our bodies. Assuming that the one is derived from the other, our bodies must be derived from the universe's. Likewise, each of us has a soul *(psyche)* so it must be derived from the World-Soul. Otherwise, we would have to say that the Cause, which ensouls our bodies and sustains them, would not devise the most beautiful and honorable nature for the universe itself. But this is nonsense. So we should say that the universe contains much indefiniteness and sufficient limit and also has "no mean cause" which orders everything and thus may be called wisdom *(sophia)* and *nous*. Wisdom and *nous* could never come into

existence without soul. So a kingly soul and a kingly *nous* were implanted in the nature of Zeus by the Cause. *Nous,* therefore, belongs to the kind that is the cause of all (28C–30E).

In understanding this argument, keep in mind the context out of which it arises. Socrates wants to prove that reason, not pleasure, is the cause of the good life. To do so, he shows that the universe itself, and not just human life, is founded upon intelligible order. We have already seen that Philebus, like Callicles, identifies the life of unlimited pleasure as the good. Later he even says that it is the proper goal for all living things (60A–B). In order to refute this position completely, Plato must address the distorted world view that underlies hedonism. Hence, in the *Gorgias,* Socrates argues against Callicles' contention that the life of pleasure reflects the reign of conflict found in nature. He does so by asserting that the human community is an expression of the universal order (507E–508A). And in the *Philebus,* Plato wants to establish the point that since the cause of the universal order is associated with wisdom, *phronesis* and *nous,* so the human counterparts to these capacities are the cause of the good mixture (good life) in the human sphere.

Granting that this is the point he wishes to make, consider in more detail how he goes about making it. As the *Timaeus* also suggests, Plato only acknowledges two possibilities concerning the nature of the universe: either it is the product of chance and randomness and is therefore unintelligible, or it is orderly and purposeful and thus intelligible.[64] Obviously, he believes that latter to be the case. The only question is, what is the nature and extent of the cosmic order? Here Socrates assumes that the basic elements make up both living (particularly human) being and the universe as a whole. Notice that he nowhere asserts that an exact parallel exists between the two. He does not say that every feature of one is contained in the other, nor does he assert that, e.g., the fire in us and in the cosmos is the same type of fire. In fact, he implies the opposite by noting that our fire is poor, weak, and impure and, in general, fails to fulfill the true nature of the cosmic fire (29C). No doubt the difference between the two could be construed as one of degree. But notice how much the language here resembles that which is used to compare a sensible to the Form it embodies: the former is impure and fails to fulfill its nature while the latter is completely free of these defects. Socrates goes on to say that the fire of the universe nourishes, generates, and rules the fire in us. In other words, the latter is derived from the former (29C). Surely this is meant to suggest that the cosmic fire, etc., is ontologically prior to ours.

But if this is true of all the elements (earth, air, and water, as well as fire) and if the body is just the proper arrangement of these elements, then the cosmos is a body, too, albeit a superior one to our own. Furthermore, if this

is true of bodies, would it not also be true of souls? Of course, Socrates must first establish the fact of a World-Soul. He does so by first asserting that our souls could have no other source than the World-Soul. He then suggests that since there is a Cosmic Body, it must have a Soul. Without this assumption then we would be led to the unacceptable conclusion that the Cause provides for our bodies by ensouling them but does not do so for the universe's (30A–C).[65]

In what sense does the Cause provide for us by ensouling our bodies? Socrates says that the Cause, in providing medicine and other devices and remedies, is called the "sum of all wisdom" (31B) and he points out that wisdom and *nous* could never come into existence without soul (30C). So by ensouling our bodies, the Cause enables us intuitively to sense the basic structure of reality and then to incorporate this knowledge into our everyday activities. (These are the meanings given to *nous* and *phronesis* respectively in the classification and ranking of knowledge, as we shall see in Chapter Three. See also Notes to Chapter One, n.66.) Since intelligence also orders and guides the universe, then the Cause must have created a Cosmic Soul too, since it is "the most beautiful and honorable nature" (30B). Socrates also says this—using figurative language—at 30D, when he states that the Cause implanted a kingly soul and *nous* in Zeus. Perhaps, as we suggested in the discussion of the Divine Method, Zeus and the other gods are meant to suggest the divine realm, the world of the Forms. At any rate, references to the universe could mean the whole structure of reality and not just the physical cosmos, for the Cause of wisdom—both in us and in the universe—belongs to the *aitia* class, which is the Cause of *all* (30E). One could take this "all" to be inclusive. As I shall suggest in Chapter Three, the Good is the Cause and its power extends to both the world of Forms and that of sensibles.

Note that the Cause is not identical with either *nous* or *sophia* in the universe or with the World-Soul.[66] In the passage at 30A–C, the Cause is not said to be identical with *sophia,* but is called that name by virtue of the fact that by ensouling our bodies, it enables us to be intelligent. Similarly, since the Cause orders the cosmos at large, it may be justly called *sophia* and *nous* (30C). The Cause may be called this because it is responsible for bringing about limit and definition in a universe which still contains much indefiniteness (30C). In other words, the Cause, by bringing about order, brings about *nous* and wisdom in the universe. But if it is responsible for *nous* and *sophia,* then it is not identical with them any more than sensibles, which are caused by the Forms, are identical with the latter. The superiority of a cause to its effects is suggested at 26E when Plato observes that the creator leads and the created follows. The implication is that the Cause is

greater than *nous*.[6] This suggestion is strengthened at 30D–E where Socrates says that *nous* is merely "akin" and "close" to the Cause, not identical to it. The same is true of the World-Soul which, as previously shown, is clearly said to be a product of the Cause.

But if the Cause is not identical to either *nous* or the World-Soul, what is it? Plato need not say in this passage because he already has said enough here to establish his point that intelligence or *nous* is akin to *aitia* while pleasure belongs to either *apeiron* or *meikton* (31C). His argument does indeed rely on the fact of some correspondence of the human soul and *nous* to *psyche* and *nous* in the cosmos as a whole, but he evidently does not deem it necessary to make the nature of the latter clear. Nor does this argument depend on the exact nature of the Cause which is responsible for both types of *psyche* and *nous* and which thus makes this correspondence possible.

In maintaining that the four kinds refer to both Forms and sensibles, my interpretation differs significantly from that of Gosling who claims that they refer to neither. The difference is not so much a matter of the specific details of how we explicate Plato's description of each kind. Indeed, on this level, our interpretations sometimes coincide. For example, I agree with Gosling that the examples given of *apeiria* in this passage are infinitely divisible continua.[7] Rather, the chief difference between our two views has more to do with how the four kinds passage fits into the rest of the dialogue (or fails to do so). As already noted in the Introduction as well as in the discussion of Plato's illustrations of the Divine Method, Gosling's denial that the kinds are Forms (or genera or classes, for that matter) eliminates the possibility that the kinds can be used to approach the *aporiai* both in general and in the specific case of the analysis of pleasure and knowledge. Recall that while Gosling admits that the discussion of the *aporiai* alludes to Forms, he denies that either the Divine Method or the four kinds have anything to do with Forms. Instead, he maintains that the discussion shifts to how good mixtures can be produced by using the right *techne*. But for Plato to claim repeatedly that the issue of the good life cannot be settled without coming to grips with the puzzles involved with Forms, and then for him to drop the whole matter and veer off in a completely different direction would make no sense. Even on my reading, Plato does not explicitly solve these puzzles and then move on to apply the Divine Method directly to the analysis of pleasure and knowledge. The procedure followed in the dialogue is more convoluted than that. Still, we may plausibly suppose that the Forms would figure in the analysis and ranking of pleasure and knowledge in some way. As we shall see in Chapters Two and Three, different types of pleasure and knowledge will be analyzed and ranked by using the four kinds, which were themselves analyzed in terms of the Divine Method and hence involve Forms.

Gosling also denies that the four kinds have any relation to sensibles. Thus on his reading of 16C, the things said to be (or exist) are "neither observable particulars, nor Forms, but phenomena such as vocal sound, pleasure, considered as manifold phenomena in our experience, susceptible of general study."[69] But when have such phenomena *ever* been said to exist by Plato or any of his predecessors or contemporaries? Presumably, even the Pythagoreans considered phenomena like sound to be partly a sensuous experience and thus, in Plato's scheme, a part of the sensible world. In addition to this passage, Sayre[70] mentions others (27A, 25E, 26D and 27B) which refer to "what comes to be," which we would expect to be sensibles. I claim that such phenomena as sound have a nonempirical element which involves the Forms. Furthermore, as stated in the Introduction concerning Teloh's denial of the transcendent nature of these kinds, such Forms as fixed in the nature of things are needed to provide a full explanation of the sensible cosmos. In Chapter Three, I intend to show that in explaining what makes the good mixed life both a mixture and good, Plato invokes the Forms as aspects of the Good as Cause.

2

THE CLASSIFICATIONS OF PLEASURE AND KNOWLEDGE (31B–59D)

THE PURPOSE OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF PLEASURE (31A–C)

So far, Socrates has shown that because practical wisdom, knowledge, and reason belong to the *aitia* kind, they are superior to pleasure which "in and by itself" (31A), is in the indefinite kind. The next task he announces is "to see in what, and by means of what, experiences [πάθος] each [intelligence and pleasure] comes into being [γίγνεσθον] whenever they do come into being" (31B). They shall first examine pleasure, which, Socrates asserts, cannot really be investigated apart from pain. Both come into being, according to nature [κατὰ φύσιν], in the mixed kind. This is the kind, Protarchus recalls, to which health and harmony belong (31C).

The first question to raise about this section is this: how is its aim distinct from that of the preceding argument? Has Socrates not already demonstrated that cognition is the element of the mixed life that makes it good, since it is associated with the *aitia* of universal order, whereas pleasure

is a member of *apeiron?* Yes; but proving the inferiority of pleasure, considered in the abstract, is (though related) quite a different task from that of showing that pleasures, as we experience them, cannot be the focal point of existence, as hedonists such as Philebus maintain. In the previous argument, Socrates was able to elicit ready agreement from Protarchus because of many shared assumptions between the two. One of these assumptions was that pleasure could be considered as a single kind. But at the beginning of the dialogue, Socrates had argued that not only are pleasures not all alike, they can even oppose one another (12C–D). Protarchus had replied that two pleasures may spring from opposite sources, but the pleasures themselves were not in opposition (12E). This conflict was never resolved. Instead, Socrates turned to the general discussion of the one and the many problem. These *aporiai,* as we have seen, are then approached by the Divine Method and the classification of the four kinds. Having just finished discussing the latter, it is now appropriate for Socrates to distinguish between the different forms of pleasure and so prove to Protarchus that pleasures themselves can be in opposition.

Pleasures of Replenishment and the Nature of Desire (31E–36C)

The first kind of pleasure and pain Socrates identifies is that which arises when the natural harmony [ἁρμονίαν] of a living being is either disrupted, and so results in pain, or returns to its natural order, which generates pleasure. For example, thirst is destruction, but drinking is a filling up with moisture of that which was dried up, and so is a pleasure (31E–32A). In general, whenever the natural union of the indefinite with the definite is destroyed within a creature, the result is pain, and when the union is restored, pleasure is produced (32A–B).

This idea of pleasure and pain as the maintenance or disruption of the psycho-physical harmony of an organism has its roots, as Taylor pointed out,[1] in Alcmaeon's conception of health as the *harmonia* or ἰσονομία between bodily opposites. Plato's physiological analysis of these phenomena was given in the *Timaeus* at 64A–65B. And as Hackforth has also observed,[2] the analysis of pleasure and pain in terms of replenishment and depletion is also given in Book IX of the *Republic* (583B–585B). What sets the present discussion apart from those offered in the *Timaeus* or *Republic,* however, is the emphasis upon pleasure and pain as members of *meikton.* It was no accident that the two examples of *meikta* that Protarchus recalls at 31C are health and harmony. As clarified in the four kinds passage, the imposition of

limit *(peras)* upon the indefinite continua of the Hotter and the Colder, the Wetter and the Drier, etc., results in such *meikta* as health and music. In the present passage, Plato associates thirst with being "dried up," or too dry, which results in pain, whereas drinking counterbalances this dryness with moisture and so produces pleasure. So pleasure and pain as experiences are classified as *meikta* not only because they are the experiences of living beings who are members of the *meikton* kind, but also because these experiences themselves are the result of the counterbalancing of the opposing forces of the definite and indefinite.

The next type of pleasures and pains are those which are experienced within the soul alone apart from the body, such as hopes and fears (32C). Socrates then offers the rather cryptic remark that in these things which are pure and not generated by mixing pleasure and pain, the truth about pleasure will be evident, whether the entire kind should be desired or rather that such (unconditional) desirability should be attributed to another kind among those mentioned; while pleasure and pain, like heat, cold, etc., are not good in themselves, but some of them sometimes admit of the nature of the good (32D). The ambiguity of this passage lies in the referent of "these things" (τούτοις). As Gosling points out, commentators variously take the referent to be either pleasures and pains of restoration and depletion, or those of expectations, hopes, and fears. In either case, Socrates never considers pure cases of these types,[3] which is a problem. Another alternative is that the reference is to those pleasures and pains that involve both the body and soul and those that involve the soul alone. Plato has not said that replenishment and depletion always involve the body, but all the examples he has given thus far (hunger, thirst, heating, cooling) certainly do. Of course, all these pleasures do involve pain and are mixed, not pure. But this does not mean that, in general, all pleasures that involve the body are so mixed. In fact, Plato gives us an example of such pleasures that are pure (at 51B). Likewise, the pleasures of expectation are not necessarily pure since one may very well anticipate a future event with a mixture of pleasure and distress (at 35Eff.).[4] So, if we examine pure cases of pleasures that involve the body and those that do not, we should be in a better position to judge the desirability of pleasure in general, since pure pleasures of either type may turn out to be always desirable, whereas we already know that mixed pleasures, by virtue of the fact that they are *meikta,* are not good in themselves but may admit of the good.[5]

Socrates next introduces a qualification concerning the first type of pleasures that will prove important for a later argument. He notes that the processes of depletion and replenishment are not necessarily accompanied by pain and pleasure respectively. One may not experience either pain or

pleasure and thus participate in the life of the mind, which perhaps is the most divine of lives (32E–33C). Further discussion of this last point is deferred for "another time." As Hackforth also notes,[6] Socrates and Protarchus have already agreed at 21E that no human (as opposed to a god) would choose a life completely devoid of pleasure. I shall examine this idea in more detail in connection with the discussion of the neutral life at 42C–44A.

At this point, Socrates turns his attention to the second form of pleasure, which arises within the soul alone, apart form the body. These pleasures originate in memory, which he defines as the preservation of perception. Perception, in turn, is the union of soul and body in one experience (πάθος), and in a common motion. Recollection (ἀνάμνησιν), on the other hand, involves the recall by the soul alone of an experience it has had with the body (33C–34C).

To clarify the nature of pleasure and desire (ἐπιθυμίαν) of the soul apart from the body, Socrates undertakes a discussion of the nature and origin of desire. Desire is the longing of the empty to be filled up. For example, one who thirsts desires to be filled up with drink. But since it is the thirsty person's body that is empty, it must be the soul that apprehends fullness, not the body that lacks it. In general, since desire is always towards the opposite of the actual condition of the body, there can be no bodily desire. Instead, it is the soul that apprehends through memory the opposite of the body's actual condition. The soul is the source of all impulse, desire, and activity for every living being. Since this is the case, we may experience both pain and pleasure at the same time: one may be in pain because the body is empty, and yet may at the same time take pleasure from the hope of being filled (34D–36C).

False Pleasures (36C–44A)

At this point, Socrates suggests that they put the previous analysis to use by deciding which of these pains and pleasures are true or false. Protarchus immediately questions how pleasures can be true or false. Socrates counters by pointing out that fears, expectations, and opinions may be said to be true or false. Protarchus accepts only the case of opinions. He, along with "all of us," believes that whether one is dreaming or insane does not alter the fact if one thinks one feels pleasure or pain, one really feels it. Socrates first gets Protarchus to admit that pleasure and pain may be qualified as being great, small, or intense. He then adds to the list rightness and badness. Finally, he makes the point that just as one is not opining correctly

if one makes a mistake concerning the object of opinion, one is not experiencing right or proper pleasure or pain if mistaken about the object that caused that sensation. Protarchus agrees that we do in fact often experience pleasure in connection with a false opinion, but that in that case, it is only the latter that may be called false, not the former. In saying this, Protarchus only claims to be repeating what he hears (36C–38A).

Here Protarchus is representing the common-sense view reflected in ordinary language. For although both contemporary speakers of English and ancient speakers of Greek might refer to beliefs as false, neither we nor they would speak so of pleasures. Nevertheless, Plato insists that pleasures may be true or false. In order to understand what he means, bear in mind that what is translated "true" is the Greek word *aiethes*.

A good place to begin searching for the meaning *aiethes* might have in this context to compare the present passage to Plato's other discussion of true and false pleasures in Book IX of the *Republic*.[7] At 580D, Socrates observes that corresponding to each part of the soul is a kind of pleasure and desire. Further, there are three kinds of persons; each one is dominated by one part of the soul (581C). After some discussion, Socrates decides that the pleasure of the reasoning or learning part is the sweetest since the philosopher who experiences it declares it to be so and only he or she is in the position to compare this pleasure to the others and so be a trustworthy judge (582C–583A). Socrates then states that "the pleasure of the others, except of the person of practical intellect [τοῦ φρονίμου], is not completely true or pure but is a shadow painting [ἐσκια γραφημένη] as I think I have heard a certain one of the wise men say." With this statement, he ushers in the "major and decisive bout" (583B).

The fact that this latter argument will be ontological, as opposed to the psychological and political character of the preceding proofs, is already indicated by the language Plato employed in introducing it. In contrast to being παναληθής or καθαρά, the pleasures of the other types of persons, the honor-lover and the profit-lover, are called ἐσκιαγραφημένη, a clear allusion to the Divided Line and the Allegory of the Cave presented in Books VI and VII. The fact that this view is attributed to "one of the wise men," presumably the Pythagoreans,[8] also suggests the superiority of the non-material world over the material one.[9]

But in what sense are the pleasures of the non-philosophers impure and false? Plato offers two explanations. First, the juxtaposition of pleasure with pain leads one to mistake the relief from pain as pleasure or the absence of pleasure for pain. But since this is a third state between the feeling of pleasure or pain, this condition cannot be identical with either experience. Socrates concludes by saying "the calm, when set beside pain, appears to be

pleasant and when set beside pleasure, appears to be pain, but it is nothing in regard to truth, but merely an appearance [φαίνεται], a type of fraud [γοητεία]" (584A). This applies to the pleasures that involve the body, especially the intense ones, and includes those that arise from the anticipation of such pleasures or pains (584C).[10]

The second explanation involves the analysis of pleasure as a type of "filling up" or replenishment. Here Plato regards both physical pleasures (e.g., those of eating) and intellectual ones (e.g., of knowledge and excellence) to be of this kind. One difference lies in their respective objects, the types of "filling up" involved in each case. Although we may have a problem with textual corruption and thus interpretation of this passage,[11] the gist seems clear enough. Whatever is concerned with the unchanging and eternal and with truth is more real than that which is associated with the mortal and ever-changing. The reality of the unchanging does not partake (μετέχει) to a greater extent of knowledge or of truth than it does of reality, but what partakes *less* of truth necessarily partakes less of reality. So the kinds of filling concerned with the body have less share in truth and in reality than those concerned with the soul. The same applies to the body and the soul themselves. It follows that what is filled with what is more real, and is itself more real, is more truly filled than that which is filled with what is less real and is itself less real. Socrates concludes that since to be filled with things according to nature is pleasurable, that which is filled with less real things will be filled less truly and lastingly and will partake of a less reliable and less true pleasure. Finally, he observes that the majority of people live with pleasures that are mixed with pain, shadow paintings of true pleasure, which take their color from the juxtaposition of the two. These men are like those about whom Stesichorus speaks, who fought at Troy for a shadow of Helen instead of for the truth (585A–586C).

Although the details of this argument need not be of concern here, a few points are clearly relevant. First of all, there is the relation of being and truth. In the Sun Analogy, the presence of truth is necessary not only for knowledge (as light is for sight) but also, presumably, for being (as the sun's light is for generation). This latter point is also made at *Philebus* 64C–65A. This is extremely important to note because it shows that for Plato, truth does not only mean (and perhaps does not even *primarily* mean) correspondence to facts as a true proposition states what really is the case.[12] Instead, in these passages of the *Republic* and *Philebus*, truth is a necessary condition for being. Or to put it more concretely and in terms suggested by the Sun Analogy, only in the presence of truth, whose source is the Good, can entitles be what they are.

This latter aspect of truth is at work in the present passage from the

Republic, for Plato implies that what is *truly* pleasurable is for something to be satisfied according to its nature. The pleasures of even the lower parts of the soul will be satisfied and so will attain the truest pleasures possible for them if they follow what intelligence prescribes (586D–E; cf. *Philebus* 44Cff.). Here truth is associated with what is natural, the fulfillment of a thing's nature under the guidance of reason, which—in turn—is *arete*. Note that the association of knowledge and intelligence with excellence was made as recently as 585C.

Furthermore, for Plato, nature is reality (Being), the eternal and unchanging essences or Forms. The body, being filled not with these essences, but only with their shadow paintings, can attain nothing more than a secondary type of satisfaction. For these shadows (material goods) themselves are inferior, and the body itself (also material), is inferior as well. Even when reason rules these lower parts so that their appropriate pleasures can be felt, so that one does not confuse pleasure with the absence of pain or vice versa, these pleasures will *still* be less reliable and true than those experienced by the soul alone (by the intellect), because of the inferiority of the material objects to the Forms.

This association of truth with being, nature, intelligence, and *arete* reappears in later passages in the *Philebus,* as I shall illustrate in Chapter Three. For the present, compare this discussion in the *Republic* with what the *Philebus* says about true and false pleasures. Perhaps Plato is presupposing knowledge of his earlier discussion in the present one, so a comparison of these passages of the *Philebus* to the *Republic* might enable us to understand the former better.

Socrates has suggested at 36C that their previous analyses of pain as depletion, pleasure as replenishment, and of the pleasures and pains of expectation should be applied to the classification of true and false pleasures and pains. So far, all he has done is suggest, despite Protarchus' objections, that if one is mistaken about the cause of a pleasure, the pleasure is false. In response to Protarchus, Socrates offers, in the form of an analogy, a psychological analysis of the process of forming a mistaken belief that results in false pleasures or pains. For example, if one saw an image but mistook it for a person, what happened at that moment can be compared to the work of a scribe. The observer's memory united with the senses and the feelings (παθήματα) connected with them to "write" words in the soul. In this case, the feelings in question are false so false opinion resulted. In addition to the scribe is the painter who creates pictures to illustrate the words. False opinions are accompanied by false images and true opinions by true images. One may, for example, picture becoming rich and imagine enjoying the pleasures that accompany wealth. But what is painted in the souls of good

persons is true whereas the pleasures painted in the souls of the bad are false. These false pleasures are imitations (μεμιμημέναι) of the true ones. Socrates concludes that just as opinions not based on a past, present, or future reality are still opinions, but are bad only because they are false, so too are pleasures. Once again, Protarchus objects that pleasures are bad not because they are false, but because they are evil (38A–41A).

This argument contains several obscurities. First, Socrates never identifies the "feelings" (παθήματα) connected to the senses and memory and which produce a true or false opinion. Hackforth has suggested that these are emotions such as fear, confidence, anger, and love.[13] Fear and anger are mentioned as being the sort of things that can be false at 47E; however, such feelings would not necessarily be produced by the example Socrates is ostensibly explaining, the case of an observer mistaking an image for a person. Of course, emotion could lead one to make such a mistake; if, for example, one were anxiously searching for someone, one might jump to the mistaken conclusion that a human-like object were that person. Plato's analogy is meant to suggest all such possibilities where error could arise from a failure on the part of the senses, memory, emotion, or imagination in any combination. The point he is interested in explaining here is how such error produces false pleasures or pains. Plato offers the example of a person imagining the pleasures brought about by acquiring wealth. He mentions this in the immediate context of pointing out that all of us are full of hopes and that these involve not only "words" (i.e., judgments) but also pictures or images (i.e., products of the imagination). And immediately after offering the case of imagining wealth and its attendant pleasures, he comments that good persons have true pictures and pleasures while the bad have false ones. Furthermore, these latter are imitations of the former.

This latter point is crucial to interpreting Plato's argument here, for the idea of the falseness of an inadequate imitation that suggests how the pleasure of the would-be rich person is false. Plato's point is not that the pleasure of picturing this event is false because the hope it is based on is never realized.[14] He says that the pictures themselves, as well as the pleasures aroused thereby, are true if in the soul of a good person or false if in a bad soul.[15] Thus the distinction between picturing and what is pictured, about which much comment has been made,[16] is irrelevant to Plato here since he is condemning both the picturing of enjoying the pleasures of wealth and the enjoyment of this picturing for the same reason: the pleasures of wealth themselves are false in comparison to the true pleasures of which they are poor imitations.

If this is indeed Plato's point, it is admittedly implicit. But that may be because he assumes our general acquaintance with his basic tenet that evil is

the result of false beliefs about what leads to the good life, which are in turn based on a false world view which mistakes the qualifiably real world of Becoming for the real realm of Being. Such doctrines and their relation to pleasure and pain appeared explicitly in the *Republic* and will reappear in later passages of the *Philebus*. So far in the *Philebus,* Plato has made the general claim that mistakes about the causes of pleasures result in the experiencing of false pleasures (37E). His example of wealth in the present passage is, I believe, a case of something which does not cause true pleasure. The reason it does not was explained at length in Book VIII of the *Republic,* in Plato's account of the oligarchic man who centers his life around the amassing of wealth. He controls his indulgence in bodily appetites not out of reason but out of fear of squandering his money (553B–559D; cf. *Phaedo* 68E–69A). Such a life can hardly be called pleasant and is, in fact, condemned not only by the philosopher but by the libertine (or "democrat") who at least does not mistake money for an end in itself. The picture evoked here is of a Scrooge fondling his gold locked away in his vault. In addition to Plato's denouncement of the miserly or oligarchic personality, is his condemnation of the pleasures of the profit-lover (and honor-lover) as "shadow painted" in Book IX of the *Republic*. This passage is alluded to in the *Philebus* when Socrates contrasts the true pleasures of the good person with the ridiculous imitations or caricatures of these pleasures experienced by the bad one (40C). These pleasures are ridiculous because the money lover, the bad person, allows the desire for wealth to rule and consequently is not able to enjoy what legitimate pleasures money, seen in proper perspective, might bring. The miser's pleasures are not fulfilling, although they may *feel* pleasant, because he has a distorted view of what is truly valuable and pleasant.[17]

Protarchus, however, is not a Platonist. He does not agree that the source of the badness of certain types of pleasures can be traced to a false view of the world just as all evil, according to Platonism, can be so traced. Thus Socrates must introduce a new argument to prove to Protarchus that there are indeed false pleasures. He begins this argument by reiterating some points made previously. The body causes either our distress or pleasure, so the desire for the opposite condition of the body is from the soul. The pains and pleasures are experienced simultaneously, side by side. Furthermore, both of them belong to the *apeiron,* the indefinite. But if so, then how can they be compared to one another in regard to magnitude, degree, or intensity? For just as observations made from a distance or from too close range are apt to be judged falsely, so too with pleasures and pains. Pleasure and pain themselves, when compared to their opposite, appear greater and more intense. Hence the falsity lies in the pains and pleasures and not, as was

the case in the previous argument, in the opinions whose falsity "fills" *(anepimplasan)* their attendant pleasures (36C–D 42A–B). Socrates concludes that the aspect of a pleasure or pain that appeared to be greater or less than it really is cannot appear accurately, nor could the pain or pleasure directed towards that aspect be affirmed to be right or true (41B–42B).

At 36A–B, the juxtaposition of pleasures and pains involved the simultaneous experience of opposites, but of two different types and from two different sources. One could experience pain in the body because of a lack; e.g., one could feel thirsty because of a lack of moisture or fluids, but could also experience at the same time pleasure in the soul alone by anticipating the replenishment of moisture through the act of drinking. This seems to be the point of the present passage as well, so the problem is not that such a pleasure of anticipation actually contradicts the pain of want since these opposites originate from two different sources and are thus of two different types. Instead, these opposites, being relative to each other, appear to be of a greater or lesser magnitude, degree, or intensity than they actually are. They are, when considered in comparison to each other, members of the *apeiron*.

Socrates uses the analogy with spatial distance to illustrate this point further. Many commentators, including Hackforth[18] and Gosling,[19] take the analogy to be between spatial and temporal distance. The most obvious example would be when one underestimates the quality of a future pleasure or pain because of the more immediate experience of a present pain or pleasure whose effect is exaggerated. The opposite could just as easily occur, as Gosling notes,[20] since current discomfort could very well cause one to overestimate the worth of an anticipated pleasure. But, *contra* Gosling, we can assume that Plato intends to cover all such cases. In any event, the comparison of pleasures to pains generates their falsity, and not a mistaken opinion concerning the cause of pleasure or pain, e.g., the erroneous belief that wealth is in itself pleasant.

The idea that the comparison of pleasures and pains to each other is a distinct type of falsity, separate from the falseness caused by false belief, is so significant that it deserves special emphasis. Plato's general point is that temporal distance gives rise to the comparison of pleasure to pain which in turn causes the agent to exaggerate not only the worth of the anticipated experience, but also the pleasure or pain *of the actual experience*. The exaggeration can be of a past experience of pleasure or pain, a present experience, or one expected in the (often immediate) future and can involve distorting the worth of the experience as compared to itself, to the experience of its opposite, or to both. In other words, Plato's analysis of falsity in the present passage is meant to encompass a wide range of cases.

To clarify his meaning, however, concentrating on a specific case would be best. Suppose a person who is dieting is confronted with the choice of either remaining faithful to his calorie counting (with the expectation of eventually escaping the physical and psychological ills of being overweight), or eating a bowl of his favorite ice cream, chocolate chip. If he yields to the pleasures of eating the ice cream, why does he do so? Surely not because of a false belief that the pleasure of eating ice cream is in fact greater, all things considered, than the pain of being fat, for if this were the case, he would never have begun the diet at all. Instead, the closeness or the familiarity of the pleasure of eating (perhaps as a hedge against psychological emptiness) compared to the remoteness and abstractness of the pleasure of being healthy and fit causes him to exaggerate the pleasures of eating the ice cream so that they appear to be greater than they are; they appear to outweigh the painful consequences. This exaggeration can, in fact, cause him even to distort the actual experience of eating the ice cream while consuming it. This is the familiar phenomenon of forbidden fruit tasting sweeter, as if one's appetite were trying to justify what one knows on a rational level to be the wrong choice, by making the eating of the ice cream appear to be more desirable than it ordinarily would be. When one is not on a diet, no conflict over whether the ice cream should be eaten arises; and in the absence of such a conflict, no comparison of the pleasures and pains is needed and thus no exaggeration will occur. But in the case of the dieter, the pleasure itself is false, so he is falsifying the very experience by exaggerating it.

The dieter's *akrasia* is generated by the interplay between the true belief he rationally holds, that it is better for him to be healthy and physically fit than to eat the ice cream, and an opposing nonrational belief that eating ice cream is pleasant and therefore good to do.[21] Both beliefs must be held simultaneously and therefore by two different parts of the soul to create the conflict that in this case results in *akrasia*. (Cf. *Republic* 602E–603D, 604B. Note that in the first passage, the tendency of the lower parts of the soul to be deceived by art is compared to the deception caused by things at a distance or by optical illusions.[22]) Plato, both in the *Republic* and the *Philebus,* denies that the opposition between the appetites and reason that occurs in the soul of the akratic person is a conflict between blind craving and impotent belief. Rather, it involves two forces of the personality, each of which has the ability to form beliefs and to motivate action. The appetites, because they are naturally directed towards bodily satisfaction and pleasures, believe that pleasure is good, that they should pursue it. The problem, of course, is that in the dieter's case the pursuit of the pleasure of eating the ice cream is not good for him in the long run. As the *Republic* makes clear, reason alone has the ability to hold beliefs about what would be good for the agent all things

considered (441E). So in the dieter's case, the appetites inevitably distort reality because of the immediacy of the pleasure of eating the ice cream and so exaggerate its value compared to the alternative of refraining (cf. *Protagoras* 356Aff. and *Republic* 602E, 603D, 604B). When confronted with reason's awareness that distance is irrelevant to the question of which alternative is better, all things considered, the appetites respond by exaggerating the degree of pleasure experienced while the dieter is actually eating the ice cream. Thus the falsity is two-fold: the dieter (i.e., in his appetitive part) deceives himself so that the pleasure he is experiencing seems more choiceworthy than the alternative course of action even though he (i.e., his reason) also "knows better" all along. It is crucial on Plato's account that the rational and appetitive beliefs co-exist.

If this is what Plato has in mind, then to compare this passage to his discussion of *akrasia* in the *Protagoras* would be instructive. At 356Aff., Socrates responds to the anticipated objection that the immediately pleasant differs significantly from the subsequently pleasant or painful by observing that the difference can only be in terms of pleasure and pain. Apparently, he means that the only difference can be in amount of pleasure or pain so that the amount of pain involved in obesity would exceed the units of pleasure of eating ice cream regardless of the immediacy or remoteness of these experiences. If seen in this way, the problem of *akrasia* does not arise, for to choose an experience that would produce more overall pain than pleasure, instead of one where the opposite would result, would be absurd. What really causes someone to be incontinent is not the experience of being overwhelmed by desire (for pleasure, pain, passion, love, or fear, 352B) but rather the ignorance of how to measure the amount of pleasure and pain involved in different experiences. The cure for this is the art of measurement (356C–357E).[23]

A number of important differences need to be pointed out between this discussion in the *Protagoras* and the present passage in the *Philebus*. For although Plato states in both dialogues that when two experiences are compared, the immediacy or remoteness of them distorts our apprehension of their true value in terms of pleasure and pain, the reason he gives for this is different in each case. In the *Protagoras*, *akrasia* is ultimately linked to false opinion about what experiences contain more quantitative pleasure than pain, but in the *Philebus*, falsity lies not in our judgment but in the experiences of pleasure and pain themselves which are by nature indeterminate and indefinite. By categorizing pleasure and pain as *apeira*, Plato is suggesting an infinite continuum between pleasure and pain as between the Hotter and the Colder, the Wetter and the Drier, etc., as mentioned in the four kinds passage. Both the practical and philosophical arts of measurement, which

Plato discusses later in the dialogue (53Cff.), are ultimately subservient to the dialectic because Becoming cannot be analyzed apart from Being, its ontological superior. So, as long as the dieter tries to decide whether or not to eat the ice cream by comparing the pleasures vs. the pains of his experiences of the alternatives, he is apt not only to choose what may be more painful to him in the long run, but also to exaggerate the experiences he is undergoing in the meantime. The way out of this dilemma, as we shall see,[24] lies not in simply weighing amounts of pleasure and pain, but in discovering which experiences contribute to the proper ordering of a human life and which do not. Such a discovery cannot be made apart from an understanding of the Forms which underlie experience and make it intelligible.

The third type of false pleasure Socrates considers not only appears false but really is false. Here he returns to his analysis of pain and pleasure as the effects of depletion and replenishment respectively. He notes that we are not usually aware of these processes, yet if certain wise men are right then some change is necessarily taking place, since all things are always flowing. So only when great changes take place does pleasure or pain result. When only small changes occur, neither pleasure nor pain is caused. So three kinds of lives are possible: one of pleasure, one of pain, and one which is neither pleasant nor painful. These three are separate; pleasure is not mere freedom from pain, although some seem to believe this, since they say that the most pleasant life of all is the one without pain. But this cannot be the case since anything that is neither one thing nor the other (e.g., neither gold nor silver) can never become either of those other two things. Consequently, those who think they are experiencing pleasure when they are merely not in pain have a false opinion about pleasure (42C–44A; cf. *Republic* 584A).

Many commentators have objected that this last kind consists not of false pleasures but of experiences that are not pleasures at all. Gosling suggests that perhaps what Plato has in mind here are those who, while in a state of distress, anticipate with pleasure entering the neutral condition.[25] While Plato does not in fact elaborate on what he does mean, Gosling's suggestion is certainly compatible with the text, for Plato does apparently mean instances when one is misidentifying an actual experience or group of experiences and not merely confused on a theoretical level about the definition of pleasure. The theoretical confusion Plato addresses in the next passage. Nevertheless, the misidentification is based on a false view about the nature of pleasure, similar to the first kind of falsity, which was based on a false belief about the role of the pleasures of wealth. These two cases differ, however, in that at least some legitimate pleasures can come from the proper use of money, whereas the neutral state is, in fact, not pleasant (or

painful) at all. Likewise, the second type of false pleasure does indeed contain some measure of pleasure, but it is exaggerated.

THE POSITION OF THE ENEMIES OF PHILEBUS: CRITIQUE OF THE INTENSE PLEASURES (44B–51A)

Socrates and Protarchus next turn to the position of "the enemies of Philebus," the so-called "experts of nature" (44B) who claim that what Philebus and his followers call pleasures are really just escapes from pain. Socrates makes it clear that he does not agree with this view but proposes examining their position in order to discover more about the nature of pleasure. To this end he decides to adopt their method of investigating forms by considering the extreme instances of a type, as in studying the hard by looking at the hardest and the least hard things.[26]

In the case of pleasure, the greatest and the most common are those connected with the body and those that gratify the greatest desires, meaning those that involve the greatest intensity of feeling. These pleasures originate in some depravity of soul and body, like the case of the profligate and the invalid, and not in *arete*. An example of such a pleasure is the relief of itching brought about by scratching, which in fact is difficult to distinguish from pain. This is the case of a mixed pleasure where pleasure and pain are mingled (44B–46B).

This family (συγγενεῖς) of pleasures includes those connected with the body that are in it alone,[27] those in the soul alone, and those that belong both to the soul and body. The itch is a bodily pleasure where pain actually dominates. Of course, in some cases the opposite is true as well. Regarding these cases in which both body and soul are involved and in fact oppose each other, (e..g., when the body experiences the pain of being empty while the soul anticipates fulfillment with joy) what is always involved is a single type of mixture of pain and pleasure. Finally, there are the mixtures experienced by the soul alone, like the emotions of anger, fear, yearning, mourning, love, jealousy, or envy. Among these is the pleasure mixed with pain experienced by those who enjoy weeping at tragedies. Similarly, the effect comedy provokes is a combination of the pain of malice (φθόνος) and the pleasure of rejoicing at the misfortune of others (46B–48B).

This last case is a difficult one for Protarchus to understand, so Socrates analyzes it in hopes of making the general nature of the mixture of pleasure and pain clearer. He begins by defining ridiculousness as the condition which is opposite the self-knowledge commanded by the Delphic oracle. Then (after Protarchus pleads incompetence) he divides ridiculous

people into three different types: those who think they are wealthier than they actually are, those who suppose their physical qualities are better than they really are, and those who fancy themselves to excel in virtue, especially in wisdom. Clearly such false conceit is bad. Furthermore, all those who are self-deluded fall, like all humans, into the two classes: those who have strength and power and those who have the opposite. Those who are self-deluded but weak and cannot avenge themselves when laughed at are truly ridiculous, while those who are equally filled with self-conceit but are powerful are terrible and hateful. To be pleased at the misfortunes of one's friends is wrong, but to delight in the problems of one's enemies is neither wrong nor malicious. Ignorance is a misfortune, and self-deception is a form of ignorance, so when one's friends suffer from self-delusion in a form that is harmless to others, it is not only a subject of ridicule but also a misfortune. Thus, when we laugh at such people we experience a mixture of pleasure and pain; for malice is painful while laughter is pleasant. This, says Socrates, is just one example among many of mixed pleasures and pains which may occur in connection with the soul alone, or the body alone, or with the combination of body and soul. (48B–50E).

While Plato has Socrates explicitly state that he is not an advocate of the position that denies the existence of pleasures as experiences that are independent of pains, exactly how sympathetic he is to the ideas represented here is not clear. His sympathy with the ideal of the life devoid of pleasure has surfaced twice before. At 32E–33C, he mentions in passing the possibility that the life of the mind, apart from pleasure or pain, could prove to be the most divine of all. He does not elaborate, but has in fact suggested that this was the case, earlier in the dialogue. Even at 22C–D, where Socrates decides against championing the life of pure intelligence against the mixed life for the title of the best life, he does so by conceding only that *his* intelligence is not identical to the good, but the divine intelligence might very well be so. At 28C–31A, Socrates does prove that the Cause which orders the whole cosmos and so is responsible for the noblest features of the universe may justly be called Wisdom or Reason. Furthermore, the micro-/macrocosm argument of this passage implies that the good life for humanity must reflect the cosmic order and goodness. The upshot of this is that although the divine life of pure intellect is not a viable option for humankind, we should nevertheless strive to approximate this ideal as far as our human nature will allow.[28]

Of course, even if Plato did concede that the truly divine life was above pleasure and pain, he did not believe that all pleasure was simply the result of escaping pain. Nevertheless, he proposes to test this view of "the enemies of Philebus" by considering first the most extreme cases. These are where the

greatest intensity of feeling is involved: those arising out of conditions of bodily and/or psychic depravity. Under these circumstances a want is most keenly felt. The attempt to satisfy such wants ultimately may involve more pain than pleasure, (e.g., the case of scratching an itch), or may bring more pleasure than pain (e.g., sexual desire), or may result in an equal amount of both. But in any of these cases the juxtaposition of pains and pleasures is involved.

Regardless of the net amount of pleasure yielded in the end, the enemies of Philebus do seem to be right, according to Plato, that the escape from one physical condition to its opposite (e.g., from being hot to cold or vice versa), is desired in the case of any mixed pleasure. Thus, impatience in the struggle to rid oneself of the painful condition is followed by "wild excitement" (46D). The case of pleasant excitement, at least, produces many changes in complexion, like the taking up of strange positions, panting, and mad cries and shouts (47A). It is this last sort of pleasure that the foolish and unrestrained count as the greatest of all things, that which brings the most happiness (47B).

This last example seems initially to suggest a criticism that goes beyond the stated point that extreme pleasures that involve the body are really just escapes from pain, for in his description of what appears to be a sexual experience, Plato seems to go out of his way to make the participant in such an act look ridiculous. Although it is not completely clear whether he is condemning the act itself or rather the attitude of the profligate who considers a life spent almost exclusively in pursuit of these pleasures to be the happiest, more likely he is condemning the latter. According to this analysis, the profligate, no less than the invalid afflicted with some vile disease involving itches, is really pursuing an escape from pain and not a positive experience which has any intrinsic value. (cf. *Gorgias* 494E, where the examples of shameless desires include those motivated by intense itching and leading the life of a *kinaidos*, a passive homosexual.[29]) Plato admits that sexual experience involves much more pleasure, on the balance, than pain, since he describes sexual arousal as involving only "a slight element of pain" (47A). But this fact apparently is beside the point. Any experience that mingles pleasure and pain, regardless of the amount of each involved, is still an instance of false pleasure, especially when the pleasure and pain originate from abnormal and/or inordinate desires.

In fact, this is true not only of experiences that involve the body but also those which are psychological in nature such as anger, fear, yearning, mourning, love, jealousy, and malice. Since Protarchus readily grants that anger and grief mix pleasure with pain, Socrates spends most of his time explaining the mixture evoked by watching a comedy. Plato does this,

presumably, because his treatment of tragedy in the *Republic* makes unnecessary a discussion of these pleasures of the *thumos* here. Instead, he concentrates on the mixture of pleasant laughter and painful malice produced in the soul while watching comedy.[30] While the pleasure of laughing at someone who cannot retaliate is easy enough to understand, the pain of malice needs further comment. Plato's point appears to be that since it is only malicious (i.e., a vice) to delight in the misfortunes of one's friends, as opposed to one's enemies, the pain one experiences is due to the fact that the natural sympathy one usually feels towards one's friends is being replaced by the opposite emotion. This replacement seems possible because the friends, full of delusions of self-importance, in a sense deserve our ridicule, for one could laugh without any feeling of pain if those making spectacles of themselves were not friends.

In fact, what Plato seems to mean by a friend in this context is simply a person at whom we can safely laugh, one who is perceived as innocuous by us, for what Plato is discussing here is a comic figure on the stage. Yet just as we can feel sorrow at a tragic hero's downfall only because we can identify with him or her in some way, so—presumably—we must be able to identify with the comic character in order to feel any sort of pain at the spectacle of his self-conceit. Since the source of this pain could not, as in the case of friends in real life, involve some sort of direct interest in the well-being of the character, the pain must instead stem from some recognition that we also share the delusions of those walking the boards. Just as the secret pleasure of tragedy, as Plato observed in the *Republic,* lies in the fact that we are really able to weep unabashedly for ourselves,[31] so the secret pain of comedy is that we perceive that we are really laughing at our own unfortunate self-deceit. Plato, admittedly, does not explicitly say this but it does follow from what he says.[32]

Socrates and Protarchus conclude from this discussion that although all pleasures are not merely various forms of relief from pain, some at least are only apparent (δοκούσας) and not at all real (οὔσας δ' οὐδαμῶς), while others appear (φανταθείσας) to be both great and many (in number) but are themselves really mixed up with pains and cessations from the greatest distresses of body and soul (51A). To what do these descriptions refer? The immediate context suggests that both types of apparent pleasures are those mixtures of pleasure and pain that Socrates brings up at 44E. Those mixtures, as he reminds us at 51A, were suggested by the "enemies of Philebus." They include those which are the greatest in intensity and degree (45D) and which originate from some depravity of body and/or soul (45E). Furthermore, these mixtures may involve either the body, the body and soul together, or the soul alone. Which among these are "not at all real," and which are in some sense

real but still present the false appearance of being greater in intensity and in number than they really are? Plato does not explicitly tell us.

The mention of "cessations" at 51A, however, suggests that the second group of apparent pleasures is to be associated with the pleasures of replenishment which are necessarily bound up with pain. One case of this is when the pleasure of anticipating release can take place in the soul while the bodily pain of deprivation is also being experienced (47D). This is an experience of replenishment and depletion that affects the body and soul together and constitutes a single mixture of pleasure and pain. There are also those bodily feelings in which external and internal sensations (παθήμασιν) are united (47C, 46C–47A). The difference between these two types of mixtures concerns the relation between pleasure and pain in each case. In the experiences involving both the body and soul together, the pleasure of anticipating replenishment occurs simultaneously with the pain of depletion. The two are inseparable since one could not look forward to replenishment unless one were at that very moment in the opposite condition. These opposites, though coming from two different sources, are part of a single mixture of pleasure and pain. Since pleasure and pain are bound together, they are seen as being relative to each other, so they appear to be of a greater or lesser magnitude, degree, or intensity than they actually are, as Plato told us earlier at 41B–42B. This, then, seems to be at least one type of mixture Plato has in mind in our present passage when he speaks of those pleasures which are real in some sense but appear greater and more intense than they are.

What about the pleasures which are "not at all real"? Just before probing the position of "the enemies of Philebus," Plato drew attention to those pleasures which did not merely appear to be false, but were false. These were those replenishments and depletions which one might mistake for pleasure or pain but were actually neutral (42C–44A). Could this be what he has in mind at 51A? The position of "the enemies of Philebus" is that all pleasure is simply rest (παῦλαν) from pain. Socrates declares that he is "not entirely persuaded" (οὐ πάνυ πως πείθομαι) by this view (51A). Why is he not so persuaded? Certainly he thinks that some types of pleasure do not involve pain at all; these are the pure pleasures which we shall discuss shortly. But does this remark perhaps mean more than just this? Could he also mean that there are some mixed pleasures that are inherently less than fully real, i.e., less real not because they can be confused with the neutral state but because of their own natures?

There are two reasons for supposing that Plato does indeed mean this. First, his comments on the neutral state preceded the exposition of the views of "the enemies of Philebus." And he mentions their position at 51A as that

which he used to prove that some pleasures are only apparent and not at all real. Secondly, and more significantly, at 62E–64B, where Socrates and Protarchus are deciding which pleasures ought to be admitted into the mixture that constitutes the good life, we find that of the mixed pleasures, only the pure and painless pleasures are allowed, while the greatest and most intense are not. As we saw in our discussion of 64Aff., these pleasures are associated with diseased states, especially those whose locus is the body, like scratching, tickling, and (apparently) sexual relations. Is Plato equating or at least associating the body with falsity at 51A? As we shall see shortly, when Plato is being more precise, he acknowledges different types of bodily pleasures. Only the extreme, abnormal types are condemned; the rest are either commended (if pure, like the smell of a rose) or at least tolerated as necessary for health and fitness (like the pleasures that accompany normal bodily functions). Even so, the highest pleasures, those which are divine, are intellectual in character, having as their objects the divine Circle, Sphere, etc. Since whatever is closer to true Being is more real and more valuable, the more intellectual or purely psychic pleasures are the highest while those most mixed with pain and thus prone to exaggeration and distortion are the lowest.

Concerning this fundamental point, the position in the *Philebus* is essentially the same as in the *Republic* Book IX. There Plato argues that whatever is concerned with the unchanging and eternal and with truth is more real than what is concerned with the mortal and changing. So the soul, its activities, conditions, and dispositions, (including its desires and pleasures) is more real than the body and its affectations (585A–586C). The *Republic* offers two marks of the inferiority of bodily feelings. First, physical desires are inherently insatiable. This, of course, is a prevalent Platonic theme that is perhaps most vividly depicted in the allegory of the leaky jars that Socrates tells Callicles in the *Gorgias* (493A–494C). In the *Republic,* the association between the impossibility of satisfaction and the inherent unreality of the desires is made explicit. Socrates says that those who live lives of self-indulgence without wisdom or virtue in their greedy pursuit of these "uncertain and impure pleasures," inevitably kick and butt each other to death, like cattle. They do so because "they can never satisfy with unreal nourishment that part of themselves which is itself unreal and incapable of lasting satisfaction" (586B). Both the bodily desires and those of *thumos* can only experience "the truest pleasures they are capable of" (586D) if guided by the knowledge of reality grasped by reason. The second mark is that of intensity. Pleasure and pain are so combined that the intensity of the one makes its opposite also seem intense (586C). Presumably, these two marks are interrelated. The greater the longing for satisfaction, the more intensely a

desire is felt, the more difficult it will be to gratify. The insatiable nature of these desires is due to their limitless character which, as Plato says more explicitly in the *Philebus,* is a matter of degree and intensity as well as magnitude and number.

If this discussion presented in the *Republic* is indeed in the background of the *Philebus,* then we can better understand what Plato has in mind when he speaks at 51A of the pleasures that are not at all real. For although all the mixed pleasures are impure, the intense ones are without measure and are assigned to the *apeiron* kind (52C–D). As a result, the intense pleasures will be excluded from the good life.

True pleasures (51A–53C)

Protarchus then asks Socrates what pleasures may be correctly regarded as true. In reply, Socrates lists those pleasures that arise from beautiful colors, shapes, odors, and sounds. The beauty of the forementioned is not like that of animals or naturalistic paintings, but arises from the straight line, the circle, the plane, solid figures, and also from clear and pure sounds. The beauty of these colors, etc., is absolute, not relative. Of a less divine nature are those pleasures which belong to the kind which have no necessary pains mixed with them: in this way they are similar to the divine kind. Likewise are the pleasures of knowledge which are not inherently painful, and are not preceded by the pangs of want as hunger is. Furthermore, the loss of knowledge is not painful as an experience but only seems so after the fact, upon reflection. All of these pleasures, compared to the intense, impure ones are considered members of the *peras* because they have measure.

Finally, the following question arises: which of these pleasures—the pure (measured) ones or the impure (limitless) ones—are most closely related to the truth? This issue needs to be addressed concerning both pleasure and knowledge, for by considering pure cases of each, the judgment between the two will be easier. To this end Socrates selects one case of purity: whiteness. Pure whiteness is the most unmixed and therefore the truest and most beautiful of all whiteness. Even a little bit of pure white is whiter, more beautiful, and truer than a great deal of mixed white. This example makes clear that any pleasure that is uncontaminated by pain, no matter how small or infrequent, is more pleasant and more beautiful than a great or frequent impure pleasure (51A–53C).

In contrast to the mixed pleasures, which are either unreal or present a distorted or exaggerated picture of themselves, are the pure or true pleasures. These latter fall into two subclasses: those which arise from objects that are

inherently and always beautiful, and those of "a less divine kind" (51E). To the first class belong those pleasures associated with color and form, but not those found either in natural objects such as animals (ζῷων) or in their portrayal in art, as in realistic paintings of natural objects (ζωγραφημάτων). As examples, Plato lists mathematical figures: the straight line, the circle, the plane, and solid figures. The beauty of these is not relative (ταῦτα γὰρ οὐκ εἶναι πρός τι καλά) but always beautiful according to their own natures (ἀλλ' ἀεὶ καλὰ καθ' αὑτα, 51C).

Note Plato's language in this passage. The contrast of what is relative to what is inherent (αὐτὰς καθ' αὑτάς) sounds like Plato's usual description of the distinction between sensibles and Forms. But since Plato includes colors and sounds (51D), he may not be referring directly to the beauty of Forms themselves. Nevertheless, just as we saw how the examples of the Divine Method, used to analyze Forms, were of linguistic and musical sound and that members of the *peras* kind were mathematical, so in the present passage the geometric figures, colors, and sounds ultimately are related to Forms. Why are the figures drawn by using turning-lathes and rulers beautiful and why do they produce pleasures that are in no way comparable to those of scratching (51D)? Because these figures are representations not of natural objects such as animals, but of mathematical Forms.[33] So too with primary colors considered in the abstract—like the patch of pure white that Plato discusses later at 53A–B—or the sound of a single pure note. Although there may not be Forms of individual colors and sounds, there are definite colors along the color spectrum and distinguishable notes that can be identified on a musical scale. These individual colors and sounds may be analyzed according to the Forms of the kinds *apeiron* (e.g., the color spectrum, the musical scale), *peras* (e.g., definite colors like red or notes like middle C), *meikton* (e.g., how colors or notes blend together to form other shades or chords), and ultimately even *aitia* (how shades or notes are combined). By virtue of the Forms, things in the sensible world—especially products of human *technai* such as mathematics, music, and the nonrepresentational aspects of the visual arts—can be said to be beautiful. Thus the pleasures experienced in the appreciation of such beauty are pure and true.

Note also that Plato refers to the second type of true pleasure as "less divine" than the first. This implies that the first is itself divine, a characterization which carries philosophical significance. The pleasures of the first type are described as "divine" because the objects which ultimately cause them, the Forms, are divine. Divinity is typically characterized by Plato as being eternal and unchanging, and thus superior to the sensible world. (See *Republic* 376E–382D, et passim). Why is this second class "less

divine" than the first? Apparently because its objects are. The example given here is of smell, which is still a pure pleasure because it has no necessary pains mixed with it; this freedom from pain marks it as similar to the first class (51E).

Another instance of pure pleasure is that associated with knowledge *(ta mathemata)*. Whether this is a separate class from the two already listed or a member of one of them is not made clear. Either way, the pleasures of knowledge are pure because they are neither preceded by painful pangs or deprivation nor followed by pain if lost. One might feel pain while reflecting on that loss after the fact, but the actual experience causes no distress. As A. E. Taylor and Hackforth[34] have pointed out, this passage is not at odds with what Plato says of the pleasures of knowledge in the *Republic*. At 585C Plato speaks of a κενότης as opposed to a κένωσις. While this latter is associated with bereavement, the emptiness of the former state is not a painful one because it is only when we become aware of the process of emptying that pain is felt. Also, in the *Philebus* passage Plato is speaking of those pleasures of knowledge that can be felt only by the very few (52B). So even if some types of knowledge might prove painful for the masses, some other kinds of knowledge, presumably the higher varieties such as dialectic and pure mathematics, yield pure pleasures for those few who are able to enjoy them.

Summary of the Classification of Pleasure (52C–53C)

In sum, Plato distinguishes between two basic kinds of pleasure. The first type may be described in two ways. Those pleasures without measure (ἀμετρίαν) which may admit of intensity and greatness and penetrate the body and soul alike in greater or lesser degree, are assigned to the *apeiron* kind (52C–D). So the mixed pleasures are classified as *apeiron* when Plato considers their inherent capacity for extending in both degree of intensity, magnitude, and number. But when limit is imposed on them through intelligence he considers them members of *meikton* (31Aff.). Except in cases of extremely intense pains and pleasures (especially bodily experiences), most pleasures are experienced as *meikta*. These would include those associated with physical health and strength, which are mentioned as *meikta* in the four kinds passage.

The second type are the pure pleasures which are in their very nature limited. The first sub-group of these pleasures is limited in the sense they are closely connected to Forms. What exactly this connection consists of is not explicitly stated, but the formal aspects of geometry, music, and art seem to

be more akin to Forms than are natural objects or their representations. Perhaps Hackforth, following Bosanquet, is right when he suggests that Plato conceives of beauty here as a differentiated unity, but one which involves a minimum of differentiation.[35] If so, then this supports my argument that these things are beautiful because they represent the Forms better than natural objects do. In the *Philebus*, the emphasis is on the interrelations between the forms, conceived as wholes composed of parts which constitute a single unified system. The second group of pure pleasures is limited in a more mundane or "less divine" way. Since they do not involve their opposite, pain, these pure pleasures cannot form indefinite continua.

Clearly the key to the classification of pleasure is to compare the different varieties according to the criteria of limit, purity, and truth. In so doing, the Divine Method is applied indirectly, since this method was used to distinguish the four kinds; the first three—the indefinite, definite, and the mixed kind—are employed throughout the classification of pleasure. This indirect approach seems necessary because pleasure is so multifarious that a straightforward application of the method would be impossible. In other words, the sensible experiences of pleasure are so diverse, especially since false and true pleasures are irreconcilably opposed, that they cannot be united under a single Form but instead must be analyzed according to the more general kinds.

Although by now Plato has made obvious enough that the pure pleasures are superior to the impure, mixed ones, he underscores this point by explicitly asking which is more closely related to truth. Up until now he has treated "pure" and "true" as more or less equivalent terms, but he did not justify this practice by specifying what he meant by these terms. Here he gives an example of purity: unmixed white. In a sense, unmixed white is clearly more white than that which is mixed with other colors. But Plato goes on to conclude that it is also the truest and most beautiful of all whiteness. He does not explain the relations between purity, truth, and beauty here but seems to think that he has said at least enough to establish his immediate point, which is that a pleasure unmixed with pain is categorically superior to one mixed with pain, simply because purity—a thing's being just what it is and nothing else—is more valuable than magnitude, number, frequency, and (as he said earlier) intensity. But the question immediately resurfaces: why is it more valuable? The undesirable consequences of a pleasure mixed with pain have already been spelled out in some detail. But this in itself is not a complete answer. In fact, the very point Plato is making in this passage is that purity is valuable (even highly valuable) in its own right and not just as the absence of impurity, which in the case of pleasure means being mixed with pain. I have argued that the value of the pure pleasures, at least those of

the higher, "divine" group, is to be found in their relations to the Forms. This point becomes increasingly explicit as Plato subsequently discusses the relations between pleasure, knowledge, purity, Being, truth, beauty, and goodness. The present passage is meant to turn our attention to the forthcoming ontological discussion.

Ontological argument against hedonism: becoming vs. being (53C–55C)

Plato presents in decidedly ontological terms his final argument against the hedonistic thesis that pleasure is the good. In fact, he seems to go out of his way to do so since the hedonism he attacks is the crude type[36] which he has already criticized at length in the *Gorgias* (492D–494E) and *Republic* (585B–587A). Plato's argument at this point in the *Philebus* is as follows. Pleasure belongs to Becoming rather than to Being; and a member of the former is necessarily inferior to one of the latter since "generation in general is for the sake of Being in general" (54C), and "that for the sake of which anything is generated" (i.e., Being), is in the part (μοίρα) or division of the Good (54C). Because pleasure belongs to Becoming, which is inferior to Being, it is also inferior to the Good and hence cannot be identical to it.

Although the position that pleasure has no being at all is one that Plato credits to "certain clever people" (κομψοί . . . τινες, 53C) rather than to Socrates (53C, D), he certainly endorses the idea that pleasure belongs to Becoming rather than Being and hence is inferior (54C, D).[37] According to Aristotle, Plato believed the end to be superior to the process of reaching it, so that the *genesis* of pleasure cannot be an end or good any more than building a house, as opposed to the house itself, can be an end (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1152B12–15). Thus the examples Plato gives at 53D and 54C–D of brave lovers for the sake of beloved boys, and shipbuilding for ships, and drugs for health, are illustrations of how an activity or process has as its *raison d'etre* the end towards which it moves. The further ontological implications of this I shall consider more in Chapter Three.

The classification of knowledge (55C–59D)

After classifying pleasure, Socrates and Protarchus turn to the task of classifying knowledge. Earlier (at 12C–14A), Socrates has convinced Protarchus to drop his objection that pleasures *qua* pleasures are not opposed to each other, through Socrates' own admission that knowledge also was of

different types and thus might also turn out to contain opposing forms. Protarchus approved of Socrates' suggestion that both of their candidates—pleasure and knowledge, respectively—be subjected to equal scrutiny (14B). Thus at 55C Socrates pledges to test knowledge just as rigorously as he had tested pleasure.

Socrates begins by dividing knowledge into two parts: productive knowledge (δημιουργικόν), also called "the manual arts," (ταῖς χειροτεχνικαῖς), and knowledge concerned with education and nurture (παιδείαν καὶ τροφήν, 55D). Within the former are two types: one that is closer to knowledge (ἐπιστήμης) and is the purest (καθαρώτατα) and one which is less so (55D). Socrates distinguishes between these two types by considering the extent to which different *technai* employ the sciences of arithmetic, measurement, and weighing. He does so since if these sciences were separated from all the branches of knowledge, what would be left would be virtually worthless, nothing more than guesswork based on practice rather than on measurement. Playing music (probably by ear[38]), medicine, agriculture, piloting, and generalship are all examples of such imprecise *technai*. By contrast, building is more exact because it uses a good number of measurements and instruments (55E–56C). Furthermore, within both arithmetic and the science of measurement there are two distinct kinds: those of the many and those of the philosophers. Concerning arithmetic, some reckon unequal units (e.g., two armies), while others insist on units that are all equal to one another. Likewise, calculation (λογιστική) and measurement used in building and trade differ from the geometry of philosophers (56D–57A, 57D).

The classification given so far is the result of making certain divisions. Note that the first division is twofold, and that further subdivisions are made only for one of the original parts—that of productive knowledge. Division, as part of the Divine Method, is made according to what is most likely to shed light on the subject matter at hand. In this case, of course, the point is to identify the criteria by which we will be able to judge how important knowledge is—both in general as a class, and in its particular types—in the good life. Thus Socrates and Protarchus concentrate on the productive types of knowledge, for these make it clear that measurement and precision are the crucial features we value.

The distinction between practical and philosophical arithmetic and geometry recalls the discussion in *Republic* VII.The *Republic* passage begins with Socrates searching for a program of study which would be appropriate for the guardian-rulers who will eventually become philosophers but who will be trained as warriors when young. Thus one criterion for the type of study required will be that it "not be useless to soldiers" (521D, 525B).

Number and calculation is then singled out as "the thing common to all crafts, thought, and forms of knowledge" (552C) and as that which "every craft and form of knowledge must necessarily participate in" (522C), including the art of war (525C). Similarly, geometry can be used for organizing battle formations, etc. (526D). But the most important use of both arithmetic and geometry is to turn the soul away from ("convert," ψυχῆς περιαγωγή) the sensible world towards the realm of truth and Being, i.e., the Forms (521C, 525B, 525C, 526E, 527B). This transition from a mere reckoner or calculator of troops or battle formations to a reckoner of Being (525B) and contemplator of the Idea of the Good (526E) is made possible by the study of pure numbers in which every unit is equal to every other (526A), and geometry as the knowledge of what "always is being" (ἀεὶ ὄντος, 527B). Such a transition from "philosophical" arithmetic and geometry to the dialectic is also assumed by Plato in the *Philebus* to be possible.

The connection between the principle of the mean or the art of measurement and the dialectic is also made in the *Statesman,* as noted in the discussion of the Divine Method in Chapter One. First the Stranger divides the art of measurement into two parts: that which measures length, depth, breadth, or velocity of objects by relative standards, and that which uses due measure, a norm which is fixed and establishes the proper mean between extremes (284E). The Stranger then declares that "our wise friends" (probably the Pythagoreans[39]) are right when they say that "measurement is involved in all things that are brought into being" (ὡς ἄρα μετρητικὴ περὶ πάντ' ἐστὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα, 285A) since "in a certain respect all things involved in the arts involve measurement" (285A). But these friends err in confusing the two types of measurement because they lack the proper method (285B). The proper method, as noted in the discussion of the Divine Method in Chapter One, is Collection and Division, which is also identified with the dialectic.

Given these passages in the *Republic* and *Statesman,* it is not surprising that in the *Philebus* the "philosophic" arithmetic and metrical arts surpass the more pedestrian varieties in purity, exactness (these two are equated at 57B), and truth (57D), just as some pleasures surpass others in purity and truth (57B).[40] Nor should we be surprised to find Socrates declaring at 58A that the dialectic is the truest form of knowledge, for its primary concern is not with practical needs like rhetoric but with pure truth (58C–D). This fact is supported by reason, "that power of the soul . . . which by its nature loves truth and does all things for the sake of truth" (58D).

Plato does not, as Gosling has suggested,[41] employ two different standards—method and subject matter—when judging the extent of truth or purity involved in the various forms of *technai* and knowledge. For Plato, the

nature (e.g., exactness) of a method is derived from the nature of its subject matter; one cannot apply a precise method to an inherently imprecise subject. Plato is in fact *showing* (rather than saying) this very point since he can more readily apply the method of division to knowledge, because all forms of knowledge inevitably involve measure, while his account of pleasure is less precise, because pleasure, except for the pure type, is not intrinsically limited. Of course, the classification of knowledge is not totally devoid of ambiguities.[42] But in the case of knowledge, all its types form a unit, and some are more exact than others, depending on the relative definiteness of their respective objects. Given this last point, we should expect Plato to demonstrate the epistemological superiority of the dialectic over *technai* by referring to the ontological superiority of the former's objects, which is precisely what he does.

The dialectic is defined as "that knowledge which has to do with Being [τὸ ὄν] and Reality [τὸ ὄντως] and that which is always the same [ταὐτὸν ἀεί]" (58A). By contrast, the practitioners of *techne* are said to:

> make use of opinion [δόξαις] and persistently investigate the things of opinion. . . . Even if they believe they are investigating nature [φύσεως] they are spending their lives studying the things of this cosmos. (59A)

The objects of *technai,* the things of the perceptible world, are further described as "never have been nor will be nor [are] now in the same state" (59B). Thus Socrates asks, "Concerning these things, how can we possess any stability whatever when they never become stable?" (59B). Socrates and Protarchus therefore conclude

> that stable (βέβαιον] and unsullied [καθαρόν] and true and what we called unalloyed [knowledge] has to do with what is always the same and unmixed, or what is the most akin to them; and all other things are to be considered secondary and inferior. (59C)

Although the passage above is somewhat ambiguous, when taken in context, we can see that it affirms the epistemological inferiority of *technai* based on the ontological inferiority of their objects. The "all other things" (τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα, 59C) is ambiguous; which is meant here, all other types of knowledge (i.e., *technai)* or their objects (i.e., sensibles) is not clear. The context, though, suggests that both are meant. Note the link between *doxa* and sensibles made at 59A and the condemnation of sensibles as things that "are becoming, will become and have become" (τὰ γιγνόμενα καὶ

γενησόμενα καὶ γεγονότα, 59A) because they are completely unstable and thus cannot be known with any certainty. This echoes the doctrines stated in earlier dialogues (e.g., *Phaedo* 79; *Symposium* 207D; *Republic* 479A, 585C). The point here appears to be Plato's frequent claim that *techne* does not yield certain or true knowledge because sensible objects are in the unstable process of becoming. The dialectic, however, is true knowledge since its objects are true Being (i.e., the Forms) which is (are) eternal and unchanging.

As might be expected, this passage (55C–62A) is a crucial one in the revisionism vs. anti-revisionism debate. The focus is on the ontological status of the objects of knowledge and dialectic *vs.* those of *techne*. Henry Teloh takes the middle ground in this debate by arguing that the text fails to determine whether the objects of Being are transcendent Forms or unseparate kinds since immutability would be characteristic of either.[43] I might agree if immutability were the only characteristic of Being presented in this passage; but it is not. Being is also said to be "unmixed" (59C), the object of pure and true knowledge (58C). In contrast, the entire physical cosmos (Becoming) is mutable, unstable, an unfit object for (true) knowledge (59A), and in general inferior (59C). To me, the language in this passage is clear enough in its own right so that it supports a *prima facie* anti-revisionist reading even without comparing it either to passages in the middle dialogues or in the *Timaeus*.[44]

My interpretation of the classification of knowledge also differs from those of Teloh and Roger Shiner, both of whom maintain that a radical shift in epistemology occurs between the *Republic* and the *Philebus*. The evidence Shiner cites for this shift having taken place in the *Philebus* includes the following: (1) the interchangeability of the terms *episteme* and *techne;* (2) the absence of the contrast between the visible and the intelligible; (3) the absence of a "definitional association"; and (4) the fact that the dialectic and *techne* are distinguished only in terms of purity, accuracy, and clarity, i.e., in terms of degree rather than kind.[45] Teloh makes a similar point when he says that in the *Philebus* the Divine, or the Collection and Division, Method can be applied by everyone, cobblers as well as philosophers. But in the *Republic* only the philosophers can know the Forms and it is this knowledge, combined with erotic desire for the truth, that distinguishes them from the warrior and artisan classes. In short, in the *Republic*—unlike in the *Philebus*—the dialectic is the *only* form of knowledge, not just the highest.[46]

My responses to Shiner's four points are as follows:

1. I take *episteme* here to be a generic term. Both *techne* and the dialectic are types of *episteme* in the general sense of being something roughly equivalent to "cognitive faculties." Thus using the same term to apply to both the cognition of Being and of Becoming does not necessarily imply that the two are meant to be viewed on the same scale as Hackforth[47]

and Richard Mohr[48] have suggested. Furthermore, as Mohr has pointed out, Plato does not consistently use technical language even in the *Republic*. Note *Republic* 533B, where dialectic is called a *techne*.[49] In response to Mohr, Shiner claims that the language in the *Republic* suggests that dialectic is the only way to knowledge whereas the *Philebus* does not.[50] But as I have already suggested, Plato maintains in both the *Republic* and *Philebus* that the dialectic is the highest form of cognition and hence knowledge in the full or true sense, and the lower forms, including *techne,* presuppose it. (This point shall be elaborated in the final ranking which I shall discuss in Chapter Three.)

2. If the use of terminology is inconclusive then so is the absence of any particular phrase. Instead of isolating certain words from the context, the similarities and differences between the *Republic* and *Philebus* must be judged according to the overall point and tone of their respective discussions on the subject of knowledge and methodology. Here, as in the discussion of pleasure, the *Philebus* can be seen as an extension of the *Republic*.

3. Shiner seems to forget that the dialectic is associated with the Divine Method, which is based on the assumption that there is a "one". In Chapter Three, I shall argue that the ultimate one is the Good, so that the dialectic in the *Philebus* is not different in its aim from what it was in the *Republic,* since both seek the Good as the first principle.

4. As I have already suggested, the distinction between *techne* and the dialectic is grounded on the ontological status of their respective objects, so to speak of the differences in degree only is misleading since the objects of higher ontological status actually belong to a different category of reality than those of a lower status. This point comes out clearly in the final ranking, when the dialectic is singled out and placed in a separate and higher class than the other forms of cognition.

Also, remember that in the *Republic,* the dialectic—as the study of the Good—is the only *road* to knowledge (533C) but this does not mean that it will be the only form of knowledge after that road is taken up to the Good and then back down the Divided Line. Once grounded in the Good as the unhypothesized first principle, mathematics could become genuine knowledge. So even in the *Republic,* it is not clear that the dialectic is supposed to be the only form of knowledge possible; while in both the *Republic* and the *Philebus,* evidently one already must have the dialectic in order for other types of cognition to be valuable. Only the dialectic leads to the Good, which is the source of all reality, knowledge, and value.

3

THE GOOD LIFE AND THE GOOD AS CAUSE (59E–67B)

THE GOOD LIFE AS THE GOOD MIXTURE OF PLEASURE AND KNOWLEDGE (59E–65D)

Now that both pleasure and knowledge have been classified, the next task is to determine what elements of each ought to be mixed together to form the good mixture—the good life (59E). Remember that earlier in the dialogue the human good was agreed upon to be neither pleasure nor knowledge in isolation from each other, but instead a mixture of the two (18E–22C; first hinted at by Socrates at 11D–12A). As already noted, the divine life of pure intellect is sometimes held up by Socrates as an ideal but one which we can only approximate given our human nature, which includes emotions and physical appetites as well as pure reason. Granted this fact, the good life as a more or less attainable ideal will be one which is a mixture of various types of pleasure and modes of cognition. However, the question of whether intelligence or pleasure contributes more to the goodness of the good mixture has not been completely answered. In order to resolve this issue, Socrates says that "we must get a clear conception, or at least an outline

(*tupon*) of the Good" (61A). He and his interlocutors do so first within the context of the good (mixed) life (61B).

Since in their discussion of both the classification of knowledge and of pleasure Socrates and Protarchus had found that some forms of each were truer than others, Socrates proposes to mix the truest sections of each to see if this will result in the best life (61D–E). The result is that all forms of knowledge are permissible provided that one has intelligence concerning the nature of Justice itself, reason in accordance with intellectual intuition (*nous*), and knowledge of the Divine Circle and Sphere (62A), i.e., divine knowledge in general (62B,D). The more imperfect forms of knowledge—*techna*—must be allowed for the practical purposes of life, so that one may "find his way home" (62B).[1] Given the fact that such practical knowledge—including even certain types of *musa*—was prescribed for the education of the guardian-rulers in the *Republic*, it is not surprising that Plato allows these *techna* to be part of the good life in the *Philebus* as well, provided that one already has divine knowledge. As we shall see in the final ranking of the forms of knowledge and pleasure, this type of knowledge (also called *nous* and *phronesis*[2]), the "contemplation of Being" (59D), is ranked above the lower forms of knowledge, *techna* and true opinion (66B–C).

Although divine knowledge is compatible with lower forms of knowledge it cannot be mixed with all types of pleasure. The true or pure pleasures are allowed because *phronesis* and *nous* consider them to be "almost our own by nature" (63E). The personification of knowledge and pleasure here emphasizes the point that in the truly good mixed life, the faculties which possess knowledge and pleasure, reason and the two lower parts of the soul respectively, must be in agreement. This passage echoes *Republic* 442Dff., where agreement between the beliefs of reason and the appetites must be secured for the sake of a well-ordered and flourishing *psyche*.[3] Clearly, the pleasures the highest type of reasoning would find most acceptable are what were referred to earlier as the "divine" true pleasure of the Divine Circle, Sphere, etc. (51B–52C). Others may be included as well, like those painless ones (66C; cf. 51E) and also those which are "necessary" (62E–63A) and united with health, temperance, and virtue (63E).

Just as the admission of lower forms of knowledge into the good life had precedence in the *Republic*, so too does the allowing of necessary pleasures. At *Republic* 558Dff., Plato distinguishes between necessary and unnecessary desires. The former consists of three types: what is necessary for survival, what is not needed to sustain life but is beneficial (e.g., conducive to fitness), and what is both. Plato's examples of the last two types[4] are eating bread and eating seafood (ὄΨο), respectively. Unnecessary desires, on the other hand, are those which do no good and may be in some cases

harmful, like the eating of extravagant foods. While Plato may mean pleasures that result from either type of necessary desire at *Philebus* 62E–63A, he probably means those which are beneficial without being necessary for survival at 63E. After all, the "fitness" involved in these desires mentioned in the *Republic* could be extended easily to include not only physical health, but also temperance and virtue in general. This is consistent with the prominence of the body/soul, health/virtue analogy in the *Republic* and throughout many of the early and middle dialogues.[5]

The greatest and most intense (τὰς μεγίστας . . . τὰς σφοδροτάτας, 63D) pleasures, however, are not included in the good life. These are the intense mixed pleasures, especially the physical ones, which *phronesis* and *nous* reject as a hindrance to them and their "children," the true and the necessary pleasures, since the disturbances they generate prevent wisdom from even being born and the carelessness and forgetfulness they engender destroy the pure pleasures (63D–E).

So far, the purest and highest forms of pleasure and knowledge are central to the good life, and any of the lower types that interfere with the higher ones are to be barred. One might expect Socrates and Protarchus to conclude their survey of the components of the good, mixed life at this point by ranking the higher forms of pleasure and knowledge. But this, in fact, is not what happens; instead, Socrates suggests that anyone who desires to discover the most peaceful and beautiful mixture must try to learn the nature of the good in humanity *and in the universe* and to divine its Form (*idea*, 64A). The consideration of the universe in the discussion of what makes human life good harks back to the earlier focus on the association of intelligence with the universal Cause (28C–31A), and also points forward to the discussion of universal Good, as the supreme Form.

Socrates and Protarachus decide to add truth to the mixture because "that which does not mix with truth could never truly come to be or truly result from coming into being [*genomenon*]" (64B). As has been widely noted,[6] the use of *aletheia* here clearly means something other than just the correspondence of a proposition to reality, or a type of cognition. The fact that the different forms of knowledge have already been added to the mixture suggests that truth here does not mean a cognitive activity or faculty. At 64E–65A, Plato includes this same Truth as a component of the Good, which is why at 64C Socrates declares that the discussion of truth has brought Protarchus and him to the "very door of the Good's abode." As I shall show shortly, the Good is a Form, and Truth, as a part of the Good, is a Form whose presence is required for the good mixture even to exist.

Another part of the Good is Measure or Proportion. Without this, the good mixture could not even be a mixture but rather would just be a jumbled

mess (64D–E). Since Measure and Proportion are identified with beauty and virtue, the power of the Good can be seen as taking refuge in the nature of the Beautiful (64E). So the Good consists of these three parts: Beauty, Proportion, and Truth. These three, when considered to be one (i.e., the Good), are the cause of the mixture and of the goodness of the mixture (65A).

Consider more carefully how the Good is the cause of the mixture. Truth is said to enable the mixture—or anything else—to come into being as well as to become intelligible (65D). Truth is prior to knowledge and thus superior to it. The same point is made by the ontological component of the Sun Analogy in the *Republic*. The parallel between the sun's light and the Good's truth extends beyond the visual model of knowledge. Socrates points out that just as the sun not only makes things visible but also provides for their generation, growth, and nurture, so too the Good is responsible not only for the intelligibility of the Forms but also for their Being (509B). Although Plato does not explicitly say that the Good provides for Being *via* Truth, this is a reasonable inference to make. After all, in the analogue of the visible world, sunlight is clearly the immediate source of the generation, growth, and nurture of sensibles; so too Truth would be the immediate source of the Being of the Forms. On this point, the *Philebus* is more explicit; in it Socrates states that Truth is that part of the Good which enables the mixture to exist at all. If not for Truth, no knowledge and pleasure would exist to mix together and form the good life. There would be no reality at all, at either the universal or the human level.

Proportion or Measure is likewise essential in order for the components of the good life to compose a mixture rather than a jumbled heap. In other words, Proportion brings unity, so the good, mixed life would be a unified one with its primary focus on what is most true, real, and valuable. Beauty, although Plato does not explicitly say so, brings a certain type of order, the perfect order that something displays once it has fully realized its function and has achieved its excellence (*arete*). This is implied by the connection between Proportion on the one hand and Beauty and *arete* on the other (64E). The good life would be the one led by the person whose life displays the kind of order that is grounded in reality (truth and intelligence), beauty, and excellence. All three—Truth, Proportion, and Beauty—taken together make the mixture good.

THE FINAL RANKING (65A–66C)

By considering each part of the Good—Beauty, Proportion, and Truth—in relation to both pleasure and knowledge, Plato shows that

knowledge is more akin to the highest Good than is pleasure. As such, it is more honorable among humans and gods (65A–B). In the dialogue, Socrates reaches these conclusions by comparing pleasure as a class to the highest type of knowledge, the combination of *nous* and *phronesis*. (The significance of coupling these two terms together I shall consider shortly.) He says that *nous* is either truth itself or the most like it and truest while pleasure is the greatest of impostors (ἀλαζονίστατον, 65C). Likewise, nothing is more in harmony with measure than *nous* while the opposite is true of pleasure. Finally, *phronesis* and *nous* are never unseemly whereas the greatest pleasures are ridiculous or disgraceful (65E–66A). Consequently, in the final ranking of possessions (κτῆμα), measure, the mean, fitness, and all considered similar to these is first.[7] Second is proportion, beauty, completeness (τὸ τέλεον), sufficiency, and all belonging to that kind. Third come *nous* and *phronesis*. To fourth place belong the forms of knowledge, crafts, and true opinions since they are more akin to pleasure than to the Good. In fifth and last place are the painless and pure pleasures (66A–C).

The order of goods in the final ranking is determined by what will bring about the ideal human situation in terms of how we can best express the universal Good by realizing our proper place within the order of reality. The best expression must balance what plays the most crucial role in enabling us to live good lives with what is most exalted or divine. The final ranking is perhaps confusing because Plato switches emphasis from the one criterion to the other, but does not do so arbitrarily. The first two ranks seem to be established according to the first criterion. Although Proportion and Beauty may be higher-order goods in the general scheme of things, the mean and other points of limit are crucial in producing health and excellence or virtue, which are the most basic expressions of Proportion, Beauty, and Truth,[8] (i.e., the Good), in human life.[9] We must have these goods first before we can experience beauty and proportion in knowledge and pleasure. Once health and virtue are secured, the various types of knowledge and pleasure are ranked according to how well they exemplify the universal or divine order. Here the second criterion comes into play.

In the ranking of knowledge, the truest (not the most basic) mode of cognition ranks first and is even put into a separate category from the rest. In order to understand this last point, remember that although the various types of cognition were distinguished according to their purity and accuracy, this does not mean that the different kinds are all on the same level and simply differ in terms of degree of purity and accuracy. *Nous* and *phronesis* are singled out as the highest because they are identified with the dialectic. The superiority of the dialectic, in terms of both knowledge and value, rests on the fact that our use of it involves us with ontologically superior objects.

These objects—in contrast to those of *technai*—are stable, pure, and true. They are, to use Gregory Vlastos' phrase, "cognitively dependable,"[10] but are so, as I have argued elsewhere,[11] because they, unlike sensibles, are real without qualification. The phrase, "true Being," also has evaluative connotations that are grounded in the ontological sense of truth discussed earlier. Truth, as an aspect of the Good, enables everything to have its proper measure of reality. To appreciate fully the truth, then, one must accord to everything its proper value as an expression of a true understanding of reality, both distributively and collectively. In other words, one must live so as to acknowledge that the scales of Being and of value are one.

The dialectic enables us to assign the true value to things in two ways. First, it enables us to understand the scale of Being and value by revealing the basic structure of the realm of true Being, which in turn explains the underlying order of the sensible world. This is the noetic aspect of the dialectic, the first member of the pair called *nous* and *phronesis*. As already noted, *nous* is related to *noesis*, the intuitive vision or grasp of the Forms in the Divided Line of the *Republic*. Although Plato is moving away from the visual/tactile model of knowledge in the *Philebus*, the term *nous* still may refer to a type of knowledge which, once realized, is self-evident. This aspect of the dialectic is what enables us to intuit the one which manifests itself in the many. As such, it is what grounds the Divine Method. As established in the discussion of *aitia* in the four kinds passage (see Chapter One), the cause of order in the universe at large is associated with *nous* (and *sophia*), so insofar as the Divine Method illuminates the basic structure of reality, it enables us to see the intelligibility of the universal order. Second, the dialectic helps us embody our knowledge of the Forms. This aspect is called *phronesis*, practical reasoning, for it guides our attempts to order our lives properly. In the four kinds passage, *phronesis* was associated with the direction or governance of the *cosmos* (28D). Because the Divine Method helps us detect the presence of the one in the infinite sensibles, *via* the definite many which are aspects of the one, it enables us to imitate the universal order in our own lives. As such, the Divine Method is also tied to the second feature of the dialectic, *phronesis*. The coupling of *nous* and *phronesis* suggests that the highest knowledge is the most complete; it is what makes our imitation of ultimate reality and value possible by combining insight and activity.

The values of the different types of pleasures are likewise ranked according to how well the pleasures promote the universal order. Thus, the pure or true pleasures are the highest and the false and inherently indefinite ones are barred from the good life together. What initially seems surprising, though, is that the necessary pleasures are not mentioned here at all. Taylor

and Hackforth speculate that the reference to a sixth class at 66C–D is meant to encompass the necessary pleasures while Gosling explains the omission by pointing out that the prize-giving is not between all elements of the good life but only those which contribute to its goodness.[12] Ultimately, I think that Gosling is right, although I take the goodness of the good life to be based on something totally different from what he proposes. As we have just seen, Plato is suggesting that once the basic goods of health and virtue are secured, human life should aim at embodying the universal order at a higher level. To this end, one should bear in mind that the value of any pleasure is secondary to that of the object or activity it attends. The pleasures that accompany health and virtue are valuable only insofar as they promote these conditions. In this way the lower pleasures differ from the lower types of knowledge. Although the relative values of the lower vs. the higher kinds of knowledge are dependent on their respective objects, even the lowest type is valuable insofar as it is inherently limited; the purpose of any kind of knowledge is to provide order and measure to some extent. In this way, all knowledge displays measure and truth. But this is not the case for all pleasures. Only the pure or true pleasures are inherently limited and thus capable of expressing unambiguously the divine nature of their objects. The necessary pleasures are limited only by the imposition of intelligence, for they are still mixed with their opposite pain. As such, they do not give a clear indication of the universal Good. If what is truly good in our lives is what best reflects the Good, then the omission of the necessary pleasures is understandable. Our lives should, as much as possible, exemplify true Being which lies beneath the surface of human experience.

THE GOOD AS THE ULTIMATE ONE AND CAUSE (REVIEW)

The Divine Method assumes that there is a one, a comprehensible monad or unit which ultimately unites and encompasses the indefinite sensible phenomena *via* a definite number of parts or aspects. Here in the final pages of the *Philebus,* the Good, described earlier (at 20D) as the most perfect or complete of all entities, seems to be the ultimate One. However, unlike the Neoplatonic One, which is an absolute simple, the Platonic One is a unity of interrelated parts. Earlier in the *Philebus* (at 54C) Plato said that part (*moira*) of the Good is "that for the sake of which anything is generated", i.e., Being. In other words, Becoming (what is generated) is for the sake of Being in the sense that the latter is the end or good towards which the former moves. Being, in turn, is part of the Good. Presumably, Being includes the whole World of the Forms, but Proportion, Beauty, and Truth

are explicitly mentioned because they are the most relevant to the formation of the good, mixed life. This description of the Good, then, is expected, given the Divine Method's recommendation to look for a one, then the many parts it has, and then to allow the rest to pass into the indefinite. In terms of the good life, the types of pleasure and knowledge that are part of the mixture are those which admit of some measure or proportion and truth while those that are either inherently indefinite or have no intrinsic value (the necessary pleasures) are left out. Measure or limit, as well as purity or truth, are used to rank the various types of knowledge and pleasure. The highest types are called divine because their objects belong, or are most akin, to the realm of true Being, which is part of the Good. So, in considering how the Divine Method is both associated with the dialectic and applied in ranking the goods of the mixed life, we are led to the Good.

Another related way we are led to the Good is by considering its role as cause. Although the expressed purpose in these passages is to show that Truth, Proportion, and Beauty make the mixture that is the good life good, note that these three taken together as the Good would likewise be responsible for any mixture whatsoever. If this is so, then the Good is the cause of the *meikton* (mixed kind) in general and should be identified with the *aitia* of the four kinds. This would explain why, as noted in Chapter One, the Cause is superior to both Soul and *Nous*, even in their cosmic manifestations. The Good is the Cause of all order and hence enables the basic physical elements to join and work together to form a functioning (living) organism. In other words, the Cause ensouls both the cosmic and human body. The highest level of organization in the animated body (whether cosmic or human) is intelligence or intelligibility.[13] In the closing pages of the dialogue, we learn that both intelligence and intelligibility, and even being, are made possible by the agency of the Good *via* its aspects such as Proportion, Beauty, and Truth. Proportion is associated with order, Beauty with *arete*, and Truth with being.

We might be able to understand the Good as the ultimate One and Cause a little better if we compare briefly what has been said so far to similar points made in the *Republic* and *Timaeus*, and also distinguish Platonic ideas from Neoplatonic ones. The Good in the *Republic* is the model towards which the philosopher-rulers look so that they may be able to order their own souls, the *polis*, and its citizens properly (540B; see also 484D, 500D–E, and 506A–B). The use of the Good as the model of order suggests that the Good is unity in some sense. If so, then we can understand why the Good is the ultimate goal which everyone should strive to acquire (505D), for in order to experience the true value of anything, one must be aware of its proper place within the whole of reality for which the Good is the model.

But how is the Good the model for all reality? To give a definitive answer to this question would go beyond the scope of this work and would not be fruitful to pursue in detail here. After all, Socrates in the *Republic* (and also in the *Philebus*) warns us that he can provide only an outline of the Good. Still, we must have some idea of what its general contours are like so that we might be able to use it to guide our lives. One crucial feature of the Good is its unity, but this unity is depicted in two different ways in the *Republic*. One is that the Good encompasses the World of the Forms and orders them within itself. This is the sort of picture Richard Patterson has in mind when he describes the relations between the Good and the other Forms:

> All Forms have one common connection to the Good, even a common dependence on the Good for their very being, for each form is one place or position in the natural (good) order of things.[14]

Such a model is suggested when Plato says that Forms combine with each other (476A), and that the Good presides over the Intelligible World yet is still a part of it, as the sun is part of the sensible world. We may reasonably assume that the Good unifies the Forms by being present to them, and not by being radically separate or transcendent. The Sun Analogy also suggests that the Good has at least one aspect, Truth, which it emanates as the sun does its light (507D–509D). If so, the Good is not absolutely simple.

But another model of the Good is suggested in the *Republic,* that of an absolute simple and transcendent One. Throughout the dialogue, the unitary nature of a Form is contrasted to the multiplicity of its sensible instances, so we would expect the Good to be the most unitary entity of all. Socrates, in fact, explicitly states that Truth, along with knowledge, is "Good-like" but not the Good itself, which is beyond even Being in dignity and power (509A–B). Such language suggests the absolute transcendence of the Good, which indeed was the inspiration for Neoplatonism. For the Neoplatonists, the Good is unknowable because it is beyond knowledge, and it is indeterminate because determination is negation; but the Good, as complete Unity, cannot be predicated. The unity the Good exemplifies is that of simplicity; it has no parts.[15]

The *Philebus* makes clear that the Good does have parts or aspects, and through them the sensible realm—on both the cosmic and human levels—is structured. The Good is not transcendent in the sense of being somehow disconnected from the rest of reality, but it is ontologically superior and prior to all else in that if it did not exist, nothing else would be in Being, neither the other Forms nor, of course, the sensible world. Plato is hinting that the Good enables everything, each individual entity and the whole of reality, to

be the best it can be. It does what Anaxagoras' *Nous* should have done: it is the "good binding force that binds things together and holds them fast" (*Phaedo* 99C). In other words, the Good is the unifying principle which organizes the whole structure of reality. It provides the unique "place" for everything so that each entity may fulfill its own function, purpose, goal (*telos*), or nature, and thus contribute to the fulfillment of the whole. The Good first unifies the Forms by establishing a unique "place" for each within the whole structure of the Forms (i.e., within itself). This unique place defines each Form, or, in other words, gives it its essence. The Forms in turn order the physical world. A sensible is directed towards some Form and so is directed towards its good. This is what Plato means at 54C when he says "every instance of Becoming is for the sake of some Being." And at 54C, he states that "that for the sake of which anything is generated" belongs to the Good. Indirectly, but ultimately, a sensible is directed towards the Good. Since the Good is responsible for either the nature or the *telos* of every entity—the essence or being of a Form or the becoming of a sensible—it may be called the First Cause of all.

It is important to see that the Good as First Cause was anticipated to some extent by both the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*. On my reading of the *Philebus*, the Good engages the world by ordering and sustaining all of reality. Such dynamism was implicit even in the *Republic*, although it existed side by side with the picture of the Good as a passive, static object. The dynamic aspect of the Good was mainly suggested by the Sun Analogy, and also by the god who, as a divine artisan, created unique Forms such as the Form of the Bed (596A–597E). The Good appears passive when it is depicted as the model to which the philosopher-rulers "look".

In the *Timaeus*, the causal power of the Good is represented by the active ordering of the cosmos by the Demiurge, while the other Forms serve as the passive models to which "he" directs "his" gaze. But this can be seen as just a mythic representation of the fact that the cosmos embodies—albeit incompletely—principles of order.[16] The discussion of *aitia* in the four kinds passage is similar except the Demiurge's role as creator of cosmic order is assumed by the Cause itself, and no mention is made of the Forms as models or patterns. In the *Philebus*, the visual/tactile model of knowledge is replaced by a more discursive/auditory one. Little wonder, then, that the Good (or any Form) is not depicted as a model or pattern to which we are to direct our gaze. This fact does not mean, however, that we should not imitate the Intelligible World, but the way we are to do this is represented differently. We are to imagine the universal order to be an organic whole whose parts are interconnected yet remain distinct. In trying to imitate ultimate reality, to think of the Good as the First Cause, as the Creator, rather than as an abstract

pattern set up in Platonic heaven, is perhaps more effective. If we think of the Good as the producer and governor of the cosmic order according to *nous, phronesis,* and *sophia*, then we can better grasp the fact that the exercise of our own versions of these intellectual faculties is crucial in bringing about and maintaining order in the human sphere.[17] In a sense, we are co-creators with the Good in our efforts to mix what is limited, pure, and true within ourselves so that our lives may exhibit organic unity.

My speculations about the Good as Final Cause, especially how it affects the rest of the Forms, may bear a resemblance to some Neoplatonic views; nevertheless, these positions are different in important ways. Proclus, for example, says that the Good is the First and Final Cause, since all entities, including the Forms, desire the Good.[18] He also states that the Good is a conserving force, holding the being of each entity together by unifying it. Finally, he maintains that all the intellectual Forms are in each other yet each is a thing in itself. The Forms are unified because they are embraced by the divine *Nous,* while the Good remains absolutely transcendent and simple.[19] However, the Platonic corpus offers ample evidence that the Forms cannot desire the Good because desire is a type of movement and the Forms are immutable. Instead, I maintain that the Forms are the essences they are because of their position within the intelligible realm, established for them by the Good. They have had these positions eternally and so do not become or strive to realize their good as sensibles do. The Good may be said to be the formal and final cause of both Forms and sensibles insofar as it is responsible for each entity being what it is, and for being good. Of course, to the degree something is what it is supposed to be, it is good. I agree with Proclus that something cannot realize or sustain itself without both internal unity and the proper relations to all else, but for Plato, the Good unites the Forms directly since they are aspects of itself. The Neoplatonic scheme requires an intermediary (Divine *Nous*) because the Good is a completely transcendent and simple One.

We are now in a position to reconsider the *aporiai* and see if the interpretation of the Good as the Supreme One and Cause might help solve them or at least approach a solution. Certainly if I am right then the monad or Form of the Good truly exists, for as the cause of all, including the sensible world, it has more impact on the nature of things that anything else. And as the supreme Form, it enjoys the highest ontological status. This solves the first *aporia*.

Solutions to the other two are harder to come by. But as far as the relations between Forms are concerned, a hint of an answer can be found by reconsidering the relations between the three parts of the Good that Plato explicitly mentions here, i.e., Beauty, Proportion, and Truth. These Forms,

since they are distinguished from each other by being called by different names, are different essences. Yet they are one in function in that each is implied by the other. In making something (either other Forms or sensibles) good, Truth gives to the thing in question its being and intelligibility. But how can something be intelligible unless it is arranged in some definite way? Its arrangement comes from Proportion, and something is not just arranged haphazardly; it has a *certain* order, and this order is the result of Beauty. Perhaps what Plato is doing here is extending his doctrine of the Unity of the Virtues to encompass *all* the Forms. The Good is the Unity of the Forms and each part is a separate Form in the sense that it is a unique essence, yet each is also one in the sense that it implies and is implied by, other Forms.[20] Thus the famous statement at *Meno* 812D, "All nature is akin," takes on new significance, for while each Form retains its own essence it also is partially defined by its relations to other Forms. Although Proportion, for example, is the essence of proportionality, it is also partially defined by its relation to Beauty, since its beauty is an important characteristic. The same holds true for Beauty; thus these two Forms partially define each other while remaining distinct essences. Here Plato is providing part of the map of the Intelligible World just as he did with the *megista gene* in the *Sophist* and with the four *gene* earlier in the *Philebus*.

The last *aporia* is the most challenging. Throughout the *Philebus* the relations between Forms and sensibles is stated only in terms of causality, including the discussion of how the Cause is responsible for what order there is in the sensible realm, on both the cosmic and human levels. A more implicit reference to causality is made in the statement that Becoming is for the sake of Being. In both cases, remember that these claims arise within the context of anti-hedonist arguments. While Plato is adamant that such arguments must be rooted in the correct view of reality, it does not suit his purposes in the *Philebus* to develop his ontology much beyond the points needed to support his view of the good life. But he does *hint* at a general view of the relations between Forms and their sensibles. Sensibles can be said to exist and be intelligible only to the extent that they are related to the Forms (e.g., to Proportion, Beauty, and Truth). This view accords with the one in the *Republic* where sensibles are totally relational entities, like reflections in a mirror, or in the *Philebus*, like the range of letters that may be pronounced in a syllable. The fact that sensibles are totally dependent upon the Forms means that thinking that the Forms must be either transcendent to, or immanent in, their sensibles is a mistake. Forms are ontologically prior to, and epistemologically distinct from, their sensibles, but not separate from them since sensibles can neither exist nor be recognized without the Forms.

After the questions raised in the *Parmenides,* this point needed to be emphasized, especially in terms of its implications for the good life.

If my general interpretation of the *Philebus* is essentially correct, then Plato has come a significant way towards tying up some loose threads left hanging in the *Republic*'s account of the relations between pleasure, knowledge, and being. In the *Philebus,* the Good which unites all of reality is depicted as an organic whole. The highest form of knowledge is the realization of this truth—by both *nous* and *phronesis*—in our lives. The ideal of the good life is one in which the various types of knowledge and pleasure are properly arranged in imitation of the universal order provided by the Forms. Thus, our goal is not the Neoplatonic life of contemplation which seeks mystical union with the One. Neither is it the Aristotelian ideal of the life of practical virtue, since Plato insists that we can realize our human good only by shaping our lives so that they are true to the universal Good which unites all things.[21] While the exact nature of the good life in the *Republic* may have remained unclear, in the *Philebus* the Good is shown to be neither Neoplatonic nor Aristotelian. Plato remains to the end[22] a Platonist.

APPENDIX

THE *PHILEBUS* AND ARISTOTLE'S TESTIMONY— INTERPRETATIONS OF JACKSON AND SAYRE

As noted in the Introduction, many commentators have enlisted the help of Aristotle in the attempt to illuminate the supposed obscurity of the *Philebus*, with Henry Jackson and Kenneth Sayre standing out as the two scholars who have developed this idea in detail. Both find a correspondence between *Metaphysics* I.6 and the *Philebus*. Jackson's interpretation, however, requires considerable adjustment of both texts so that the correspondence emerges.

Jackson's reading of *Metaphysics* 987b19–33 depends, in part, on his philological judgment concerning the line at 22–23; ἐξ ἐκείνων γὰρ κατὰ μέθεξιν τού ἑνὸς [τὰ εἴδη] εἶναι τούς ἀριθμοὺς.

From Alexander on, most commentators have assumed that τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς should be identified with τὰ εἴδη. Zeller expunges τὰ εἴδη.[1] Jackson, however, advocates the retention of τὰ εἴδη and the relocation of

τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς, introduced with a καὶ, after ὡς δ' οὐσίαν τὸ ἕν (21–22). Hence the line would be ὡς δ' οὐσίαν τὸ ἕν καὶ τοὺς ἀριθμούς. ἐξ ἐκείνων γὰρ κατὰ μέθεξιν τοῦ ἑνὸς τὰ εἴδη. Thus he reconstructs the whole passage at 987b19–33 as follows:

> Plato conceived the elements of the ideas to be the elements of things, the material element being τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρόν, the formal element τὸ ἕν καὶ οἱ ἀριθμοί: more precisely, the ideas come into being from τὸ μέγα καὶ μικρόν by μέθεξις in τὸ ἕν, which with Plato, as with the Pythagoreans, is an οὐσία; while οἱ ἀριθμοί are formal causes of particulars, another point in which Plato and the Pythagoreans agree. Plato differs from the Pythagoreans however in making the indefinite a duality (τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρὸν), in separating the ἀριθμοί from sensibles, and in assigning to the μαθηματικὰ an intermediate position. Here the separation of τὸ ἕν καὶ οἱ ἀριθμοί from things, and the introduction of the ideas, are the results of Plato's logical studies.[2]

Even if Jackson's reconstruction of 987b19–33 is accepted, the problem of reconciling this with 988a8–18 remains. Here Aristotle says that Plato recognized only two causes—the formal and the material. The Forms are the formal cause of all sensible things while the One is the formal cause of the Ideas. Jackson dismisses the fact that Forms, and not Numbers, are said to be the formal cause of sensibles as a confusion both on Aristotle's part and on Plato's. Aristotle is interested here not in describing Plato's theory but condemning it;[3] hence he does not distinguish between the role of formal causality in Plato's earlier and in his later metaphysics. Plato contributed to this confusion himself by using the same word—μέθεξις—to describe both relations between Forms and sensibles in his earlier ontology, and relations between Forms and the One in the later theory. This led Aristotle to think that the Forms play the same role regarding sensibles as the One does regarding them: it is their formal cause.[4] Jackson's dismissal of this passage because it does not square with his own interpretation of the formal cause of sensibles as Numbers seems more convenient than plausible. This, together with the expedient reconstruction of 987b19–33, gives the overall impression of interpreting the text much too loosely.

Jackson's motive for reading Aristotle this way is so Aristotle will be seen as attributing to Plato the doctrine Jackson finds in the *Philebus*. Jackson lists five similarities between the *Philebus* and *Metaphysics* I.6 which can be summarized as follows:

Philebus	*Metaphysics I.6*
1. τὸ ποσόν τε καὶ τὸ μέτριον are the formal elements of all things:the τὸ μέτριον is the formal element of Ideas and τὰ πόσω, the formal element of particulars.	τὸ ἕν καὶ οἱ ἀριθμοί are the elements of all things; τὸ ἕν of Ideas, and ἀριθμοί of particulars.
2. An ἄπειρον is called μᾶλλόν τε καὶ ἧττον.	ἄπειρον, called τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρὸν, is the material cause of both Ideas and particulars.
3. Both sections of μικτόν are reduced to the same ἐξ ὧν γίγνεται.	All things are reduced to the same στοιχεῖα.
4. The particular stands to the Idea as copy to model; the πόσον of the former approximates the μέτριον of the latter.	The μέθεξις of the particular in the Idea is really μίμησις.
5. The origin of good and evil are, respectively, τὸ ποσόν τε καὶ τὸ μέτριον and μᾶλλόν τε καὶ ἧττον.	The origin of good and evil are, respectively, τὸ ἕν καὶ οἱ ἀριθμοί and τὸ μέγα καὶ τὸ μικρόν.

The only difference between the two texts is a difference in terminology, but this can be explained, says Jackson, by the fact that Plato avoids using the technical terms of the Academy while Aristotle, for his purposes, wants to preserve them.[5]

The crucial point for both Jackson's reading of the *Philebus* and the alleged correspondence he finds between this and *Metaphysics* I.6 is the distinction he draws between *poson* and *metrion* (see 1 above). But as Sir David Ross pointed out, this distinction was taken from only one passage (24C6–D1), whereas in the following passages only τὸ ποσὸν is used. Thus τὸ μέτριον is not an important term and not meant to be contrasted with τὸ ποσὸν.[6] Grube agrees and adds objections of his own, including:

1. Where do the imperfect *posa* come from? If the *nous* brings about phenomena by working with imperfect formulae then particulars are no longer imperfect approximations to perfect Ideas, but perfect copies of imperfect formulae. But surely this is unplatonic.

2. The reason particulars only approximate to the Ideas is because their own nature is indeterminate, not because of the nature of their model.[7]

Ross also notes the lack of correspondence between the four kinds of the *Philebus* and the doctrine attributed to Plato by Aristotle. The formal principle of the *Philebus* is the limits of the continua, while in the so-called later theory, it is the One. The suggestion of efficient causality is also made in the *Philebus,* in which Cosmic Reason orders the physical universe while human reason orders the lives of men and women. Such an idea is totally lacking in the account given by the *Metaphysics*.[8]

I maintain that there is even less of a correspondence between the *Philebus* and *Metaphysics* I.6 than Ross admits. Note the two assumptions Jackson says Plato rejects in his later theory; assumptions that, in fact, Aristotle criticizes at *Metaphysics* 987b7–11. The first is that for every group of sensibles called by a common name, a Form corresponds.[9] First, that Plato ever intended this to be any more than a procedural recommendation or hypothesis is unclear. At *Republic* 596A, for example, Plato says we may posit (Γιτεσται) a Form for every common term.[10] Likewise the *Philebus* recommends, as the starting point of the Divine Method, that "we always assume that there is in each case one Idea of a thing and . . . look for it" (16C–D). This hardly seems to be a rejection of this principle.

The second assumption is that sensibles are what they are because of their possession of the Idea. Jackson apparently considers "possession" here to mean immanence,[11] but Aristotle simply uses the word μέθεξιν (987b10), participation. As has been seen,[12] we have good grounds for thinking that Plato wants to emphasize causality rather than participation conceived as the possession of Forms by sensibles. Causality *is* compatible with the μίμησις of a sensible of a Form if one remembers that sensibles are totally dependent, relational entities. This is a far cry from Jackson's conception of μίμησις. For him, both sensibles and Ideas are *meikta* and both are caused by the limit and the indefinite. Ideas are perfect while particulars are not, but the latter are no longer dependent upon the former for their existence and character. As Ross has already shown, however, the *Philebus* itself does not support Jackson's Aristotelian reading of it.

In short, Grube is right when he accuses Jackson of doing "violence to the Platonic text with the sole purpose of evolving a Platonic doctrine which tallies with what Aristotle says about it."[13] Furthermore, Jackson does violence to Aristotle as well.

Kenneth Sayre also argues that the ontology attributed to Plato by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* I.6 corresponds, at least roughly, to the theory

depicted in the *Philebus*. What distinguishes his work from Jackson's[14] is that he not only attempts to vindicate Aristotle's testimony but uses it (perhaps unwittingly) to support a position which is revisionist in its denial of transcendent or ontologically basic Forms. Still, Sayre's view that the *Philebus* answers the objections raised in the *Parmenides* differs from that of many other revisionists. Sayre claims that his approach also enables him to produce a better interpretation of the *Philebus* because it will reveal how the dialogue fits together as a whole and thus explain individual passages more thoroughly than has been done previously.[15] Since it is this last claim that is most important for my purposes, I shall assume for the sake of argument that Sayre's interpretation of Aristotle is correct and that Aristotle's testimony is true. The question then is whether the *Philebus* can be interpreted better by using Aristotle's testimony. In order to answer this question, I shall briefly consider whether *Metaphysics* I.6 helps Sayre adequately to interpret the four kinds.[16]

According to Sayre, the *apeiron* of the *Philebus* is equivalent to what Aristotle calls the Indefinite Dyad of the Great and the Small. With this in mind, Sayre suggests that the *apeiron* is a continuum that can be divided into a mutually exclusive set of greater and smaller factors.[17] On the one hand, the idea of the *apeiron* consisting of continua is plainly suggested by the *Philebus* itself, leaving no need to import Aristotle for such an idea.[18] On the other hand, Aristotle's testimony involves more than this. He says that Plato only recognizes two causes: the material and the formal (*Meta.* 988a8–11). This is surely suspect both as a general claim about Plato and as a report of the role of *aitia* in the *Philebus*. Concerning the latter, Plato's description of the cause certainly involves more than either formal or material causality, since he describes it as the cause of all, including the other three kinds. In general, causality in Plato does not seem to fit neatly into Aristotle's classification, nor do we have any compelling reason to try to force a fit.

Since the four kinds passage is introduced by Plato to help with the problem of the one and the many, including the "ones" (monads) listed at 15B—Human, Ox, the Beautiful, and the Good—an adequate interpretation should explain the composition of these monads. Yet Sayre's does not; rather, he analyzes the monads according to the Unlimited (*apeiron*) and Limit (*peras*), thought of as the Aristotelian Dyad and Unity, respectively. Sayre takes Gosling's account of Health[19] and applies it to the Form "Man" (sic).[20] The latter consists of a set of proportions that would characterize a normal, healthy person, but surely the Form "Human" would involve more than just health. In fact, the idea of human health is dependent upon the idea of Human. To be a healthy person means to have a properly functioning human body (and *psyche*) but in order to know what constitutes the *proper*

functioning of the human body and mind, one must first know what *function* they have. And this, of course, would involve defining "Human." A similar procedure would be necessary to analyze "Ox." These monads resist an analysis based only on limits and continua, so Sayre's Aristotelian-inspired interpretation of *peras* and *apeiron* fails to explain the connection between 15B and the four kinds passage.[21]

Aristotle's account of the generation of sensibles from the Great and the Small plus Unity does not help explain the *Meikton* any better than alternative interpretations. The idea that *meikton* refers to sensibles is certainly not a novel thesis and it may be argued on strength of the *Philebus* alone, without any appeal to Aristotle's testimony. Sayre does propose a solution to the problem of how *meikton* can refer to the whole sensible world even though the examples Plato gives are of *good* states, a solution that is based on his interpretation of both the *Philebus* and the *Statesman*.[22] To employ so elaborate an analysis to solve this problem would be, as Ryle once said of an interpretation offered by Cornford, "like using all the resources of a smithy in order to crack nuts."[23] A much simpler approach is taken by Gosling, who suggests that only good mixtures are discussed because the subject at hand is the good life.[24]

Not only does Sayre's reliance on Aristotle's testimony fail to provide an adequate interpretation of *apeiron*, *peras*, and *meikton*, it also leads him into a type of revisionism which further distorts his view of the four kinds passage. One of the major points of Sayre's interpretation is that in the traditional sense of the term there are no Forms in the *Philebus* at all. The only "Forms" depicted in the dialogue are the measures or norms that give definition to the continua. These "Forms" are ontologically dependent upon both the Limit and Unlimited, and although these "Forms" as measures and reference points can be known independently of sensibles, they do not exist separately from them.[25] The denial of χωρισμὸς is the central thesis of revisionism.

One consequence of Sayre's denial of the χωρισμὸς is that these new "Forms" do not fit neatly into any of the four kinds. On the one hand, they are limits of the *apeiron*, and on the other hand, they are the limits of the *meikta*.[26] Hence these "Forms" straddle three kinds: as limits of *apeiron* and of *meikton*, they can be said to belong to either of these kinds, and as limits in the abstract, they can be identified with the *peras* class.

This interpretation poses a major difficulty. How the Limit and Unlimited are both basic ontological principles and kinds is unclear, for if *meikton* and *aitia* are also kinds, why are they not basic ontological principles as well? But if a kind differs from an ontological principle and a Form, what is it? Why do these new "Forms" involve the first three kinds

but not *aitia*? Nothing in the text suggests that the ontological level of the kinds differ from each other, yet Sayre's interpretation almost completely ignores the *aitia* kind altogether.

I conclude that Aristotle's testimony, at least as it has been interpreted by Sayre as well as by Jackson (and others), does not help illuminate the *Philebus*. The insights Sayre does offer are not dependent on Aristotle. A more coherent interpretation of the dialogue does not result from reading it through Aristotle's account in *Metaphysics* I.6.

Notes

Introduction

1. Grote, *Plato and Other Companions of Socrates,* vol. 2 (London: J. Murray, 1875), p. 584, cited by W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy,* vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 202, n. 1.

2. Gosling, *Plato: Philebus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 228.

3. See Kenneth Sayre, *Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Resolved* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

4. See Gisela Striker, *Peras und Apeiron Das Problem der Formen in Platons Philebos, Hypomnemata,* vol. 30 (Gittingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970).

5. Vlastos, "Degrees of Reality in Plato" (1965), reprinted in *Platonic Studies,* 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 64.

6. Gosling, op. cit., pp. 153–154.

7. Ibid., pp. 165–181.

8. Ibid., pp. 186–206.

9. Ibid., pp. 203–204.

10. Ibid., p. 212.

11. Ibid., p. 222.

12. Ibid., pp. 132–133.

13. See Edith Watson Schipper, *Forms in Plato's Later Dialogues* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1965), pp. 49–50.

14. See Robert Gregg Bury, *The Philebus of Plato* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897), p. xxii.

15. See R. Hackforth, *Plato's Examination of Pleasure*, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1954), pp. 40–41.

16. See Julia Annas, *Aristotle's Metaphysics Books M and N*, Clarendon Aristotle Series, ed. J. L. Ackrill, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 19–20.

17. Annas mentions that other passages—*Phaedo* 101B–D, *Theaetetus* 198A–D, and *Cratylus* 432A–B—have been pressed into the service of being references to the intermediates but they are unspecific (ibid., p. 20). Roger Shiner also mentions the passage about Equality at *Phaedo* 74B–C, as well as those already cited. For a brief review of current views on this topic, see Shiner, "Knowledge in Philebus 55c–62a: A Response," Appendix, *New Essays in Plato*, ed. Francis Jeffry Pelletier and John King-Farlow (Guelph, Ontario: Canadian Association for Publishing in Philosophy, produced by the University of Calgary Press, 1983). I agree with Annas that none of these passages are specific enough to decide the issue.

18. See Annas, op. cit., pp. 20–21.

19. Sayre agrees with Annas that no *arguments* for intermediates are to be found in the dialogues but claims that there are *references* to them nonetheless op. cit., p. 284, n. 30). Sayre is ignoring Annas' other remarks about the unspecific nature of these references, as noted above (see n. 17).

20. See Sayre, op. cit., pp. 78ff.

21. See Hackforth, op. cit., p. 42.

22. Ibid.

23. See David Kolb, "Pythagoras Bound: Limit and Unlimited in Plato's Philebus," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 21, no. 4 (1983), p. 508–511.

24. See Jackson, "Plato's Later Theory of Ideas," "The Parmenides," and "The *Philebus* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* I.6," *The Journal of Philology*, vol. 10, no. 30, and vol. 12, no. 30 (1881–1888).

25. See Sayre, op. cit.

26. See Cynthia Hampton, "Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Unresolved," *Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 8 (Spring 1988), pp. 105–116.

27. The influence of Neoplatonism is especially marked in the works of Georges Rodier (see *Estudes de Philosophie Grecque*, articles from 1900 to 1906, 3rd ed. [Paris; Vrin, 1981], and Leon Robin, *Les Rapports De L'Etre Et De La Connaisaance D'Apres Platon* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957).

28. For example, Brandis, Steinhart, Susemihl, Rettig, and Teichmuller. For discussion of their work, see Bury's "Introduction" to his commentary, and Eduard Zeller, *Plato and the Older Academy,* tr. Sarah Francis Alleyne and Alfred Goodwin (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1888).

29. I adopt the term "revisionism" from Roger Shiner, *Knowledge and Reality in Plato's Philebus,* (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum & Co., B.V., 1974). Earlier, such terms as "revolutionary interpretation" were used to refer to this position. See, e.g., R. E. Allen's Introduction to *Studies in Plato's Metaphysics,* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. ix–xii.

As William Prior has pointed out (in *Unity and Development in Plato's Metaphysics* [La Salle: Open Court Publishing Company, 1985], pp. 2–5) the revisionist movement in scholarship came to the forefront with Gilbert Ryle's interpretation of the *Parmenides,* whose criticisms he took to be fatal to the Theory of Forms. See "Plato's *Parmenides*" (1939), reprinted in Allen, op. cit., pp. 97–147. A less extreme version of revisionism was expounded by G. E. L. Owen in 1953. See "The Place of the *Timaeus* in Plato's Dialogues" (1953) reprinted in Allen, op. cit., pp. 13–38.

As far as the *Philebus* is concerned, there are two different strains of revisionism. Those who follow Grote, the later works of A. E. Taylor, and Paul Shorey, maintain that Plato cannot or will not answer the questions first raised in the *Parmenides*. Thus all subsequent dialogues are concerned not with ontological entities but with logical concepts or categories. Shiner falls into this group. The other strain involves the idea that Plato reacted to the questions posed in the *Parmenides* by developing a new ontology. Henry Teloh's interpretation is an example of this position. Sayre's position is slightly different. Although he also contends that Plato presents a new ontology in the *Philebus,* he sees this not as an admission by Plato that the riddles of the *Parmenides* cannot be solved, but just that the old ontology is problematic. Plato's new theory, as recorded by Aristotle, was supposed by Plato to be free of these difficulties.

30. By calling the Forms "transcendent" I mean that they are ontologically apart [χωρισμὸς] from sensibles, i.e., Forms are ontologically independent and prior to their instances. Forms are responsible for the existence and nature of the sensible world. The exact nature of the relation between Forms and sensibles beyond this bare characterization is a matter of considerable controversy. But it is widely accepted that Forms are depicted in many, if not most, passages in the middle dialogues as transcendent in the sense I am using the term. I shall argue that Forms retain their transcendence in the *Philebus* although I shall leave open the question of whether other aspects of the Classical Theory of Forms have changed.

31. By this term I simply mean those who do not think that Plato rejected or radically modified the Theory of Forms after the *Parmenides*. I prefer this term to the more unusual one, "unitarian," since just how much unity one must claim to find in the Platonic corpus in order to qualify for this designation is unclear. To be an

"anti-revisionist," though, one need not hold that Plato's ontology was fully prepspent in his earlier dialogues in the way that most interpret the unitarianism of Harold Cherniss (e.g., "The Relation of the *Timaeus* to Plato's Later Dialogues" [1957], reprinted in Allen, *op. cit.*, pp. 339–378).

32. For my purpose, "essentially the same" refers to a position which involves at least the claim that the Forms retain their transcendence in the sense discussed above (see n. 24).

33. See Owen, "The Place of the *Timaeus* in Plato's Dialogues."

34. See Harold Cherniss, "The Relation of the *Timaeus* to Plato's Later Dialogues."

35. See Waterfield, "The Place of the *Philebus* in Plato's Dialogues," *Phronesis* vol. 25, no. 3 (1980). pp. 270–305.

36. Ibid., pp. 293–299.

37. See Lewis Campbell, *The Sophistes and Politicus of Plato* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894); Wincenty Lutoslawski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1897); Constantin Ritter, *Platon, sein Leben, seine Schriften, seine Lehre* (Munich: vol. 1, 1910; vol. 2, 1920); L. Brandwood, *A Word Index to Plato* (Leeds: W. S. Maney & Son, 1976); and Brandwood, *The Dating of Plato's Works by the Stylistic Method—A Historical and Critical Survey*, Ph. D. Dissertation, University of London, 1958. For a concise and lucid discussion of the dating of the dialogues, see R. E. Allen, *The Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 1, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 6–18.

38. See Paul Frielander, *Plato*, vol. 3, tr. Hans Meyerhoff, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 325; R. Hackforth, op. cit., pp. 39–43; Sir David Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, 2nd ed., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), pp. 136–138; Erik Nis Ostenfeld, *Forms, Matter and Mind* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), pp. 119–121; and Kenneth Sayre, op. cit., p. 294, n. 23.

39. For an illuminating discussion of the different meanings that *paradeigma* might have in this context, see Richard Patterson, *Image and Reality in Plato's Metaphysics* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1985), chapter 2. While I find Patterson's conception of a model (pp. 19–23, and chapter 6) attractive, for the purpose of this work it is not necessary to endorse any particular interpretation.

40. See Shiner, op. cit., and "Must Philebus 59a-c Refer to Transcendent Forms?" *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 17 (January, 1979), pp. 71–77.

41. See Henry Teloh, *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics* (University Park, Pa: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981), pp. 10–13, 171–172, 177, 186–188.

42. See Quine, "Natural Kinds," *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 118.

43. For an excellent discussion of the differences between Platonic Forms as natural kinds and the natural kinds of contemporary philosophers of science, see Richard Patterson, op. cit., pp. 138–140.

CHAPTER 1

1. See A. E. Taylor, *Plato. The Man and His Work* (London: Methuen, 1926), *Philebus and Epinomis*, ed. R. Klibansky, G. Calogero, and A. C. Lloyds (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1956).

2. See Paul Shorey, "Recent Platonism in England," *American Journal of Philology*, (1888), p. 278.

3. See Gosling, *Plato. Philebus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 73–76, 162–71, 213.

4. W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 207. See also p. 206.

5. Concerning the general problem of the one and the many, Henry Teloh (in *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics* [University Park, Pa., and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981], pp. 177–78) maintains that the "childish" version at 14D refers to Plato's reply to the late learners in the *Sophist*, where he distinguishes between identity and predicative statements, not to the solution provided by the Theory of Forms. But the Theory of Forms itself is grounded on this distinction. This can be seen, as R. E. Allen has pointed out in "The Argument from Opposites in *Republic* V," p. 329 and *Plato's Parmenides* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983], pp. 67–91, esp. pp. 78–91), in Plato's solution to the one and the many problem at *Republic* 523Bff. and in his solution to Zeno's paradox at *Parmenides* 127D–130D. In both cases, the problem or paradox rests upon the nominalistic assumption that things qualified by opposites are identical with these qualities. In other words, the nominalist does not distinguish between identity and predicative assertions; all statements are the former. The basic form of the *reductio ad absurdum* argument may be represented as follows:

1. Assume x is both like y (in that they both exist) and unlike it (insofar as they are separate entities).
2. Then x is like.
3. And x is unlike.
4. By transitivity of identity, like is unlike.

The Theory of Forms solves this problem by introducing predicative statements which express participation of a thing in two opposite Forms. In other

words, "x is y" and "x is not y" are compatible because "y" and "not y" refer to two separate Forms, i.e., x participates in Form Y and in Form Not-Y. Since this distinction between identity and predicative statements was introduced as early as the *Republic* and constitutes a basic presupposition of the Theory of Forms, this is very likely the solution which makes the problem at 14D seem so easy. The general idea that the Theory of Forms in the *Phaedo* and *Republic* is a solution to the problem of applying contradictory predicates to the same thing was first raised by Adam, who also glosses *Philebus* 14D as a dismissal of this problem. See J. Adam, *The Republic of Plato,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902, rep. 1980), pp. 110–112.

This is *not* to say, as R. M. Dancy has suggested (in "The One, The Many, and the Forms: *Philebus* 15B1–8," *Ancient Philosophy* 4 [1984], pp. 176–179) that the fact that the confusion over sensible unities leads to the study of number and ultimately, Forms, is "childish, easy and an impediment to discourse" (14D). Nor, of course, is the solution, i.e., the Theory of Forms, childish or an impediment. Rather, the *problem* itself, the *confusion* over sensible unities, is so. This is especially evident when one realizes that the problem is generated by the confusion of predicative and identity assertions.

6. For a brief overview of the controversy over whether two or three questions are raised in this passage, see R. M. Dancy, op. cit., pp. 162–66, and Robert Hahn, "On Plato's *Philebus* 15B1–8," *Phronesis,* 23 (1978), pp. 158–172.

7. While Socrates and Protarchus began their discussion of the one and the many in order to distinguish between different types of pleasure and knowledge, the fact that these are not among the monads listed at 15A is significant. Socrates and Protarchus are not yet in a position to decide what the ontological status of pleasure (or knowledge) is; indeed, the purpose of raising the *aporiai* of the one and the many is to see whether the solution to them or the method used to approach a solution could be usefully applied to the case of pleasure. Hence Teloh (op. cit., p. 177) and Dancy (op. cit., pp. 175ff.) are hasty in drawing the conclusion that pleasure is not a "Classical" Form, and are questionable in inferring from this that the monads are not such Forms either. For more on this point, see above and n. 19 below.

8. Gosling calls this interpretation of this question, "the intrusion of a quite irrelevant question." See op. cit., p. 145. Yet if the monads are non-perceptible and abstract entities, then it is only natural, from the commonsensical point of view, to wonder whether they exist independently of the mind. I expand on this point in my discussion of the first question.

9. See R. E. Allen, *Plato's Parmenides* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), pp. 92–179.

10. As Dancy remarks, since there are no difficulties with the manuscript for this passage, the emendations that have been recommended have been for interpretative purposes. For a survey of various interpretations of this passage, see Dancy, op. cit., pp. 162–165.

11. See R. D. Archer-Hind, "Note on Plato *Philebus* 15A, B," *The Journal of Philology*, 27 (1901), p. 231.

12. See Hackforth, *Plato's Examination of Pleasure* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1958), p. 20, n. 1.

13. See Gosling, op. cit., pp. 145–146.

14. Dancy distinguishes between two distinct points to Archer-Hind's question: (a) how can each and every unit be that one thing? and (b) how can we put the many forms together into one structure? The problem with (a), according to Dancy, is the same one Gosling raised (see n. 13): how can the changelessness of the units be an obstacle to their being units? This problem also arises in connection with (b) since, if anything, the changelessness of the Forms would enhance their unity. In addition to this problem, (b) also seems to be a question out of the context in which the *aporiai* were raised. (See Dancy, op. cit., pp. 164–165.)

I interpret Archer-Hind to raise a more general question which encompasses both parts Dancy distinguishes since they really are interrelated. The question is: how does each unit (Form) fit into the overall structure of the Intelligible realm and how is the structure as a whole unified? This question is relevant to Plato's discussion of the Good, as we shall see in Chapter Three.

15. G. E. M. Anscombe makes a similar point but does so because of her revisionist interpretation of the later dialogues. See "The New Theory of Forms," *Monist*, 5 (1966), 407ff. I do not share such an interpretation although I do think Plato's emphasis changes in the later dialogues. My main argument for interpreting the second question this way is drawn from the text of the *Philebus* itself, as I indicate above.

See also Dancy (op. cit., pp. 176–183) who thinks that Plato's conception of a Form as having parts, introduced in the *Parmenides* and discussed in the *Sophist* and *Philebus*, constitutes a break with the Classical Theory, where Forms were free from predication of contraries. But Dancy never proves that having parts would involve predication of contraries. If two opposite Forms, e.g., the Hotter and the Colder, form a continuum of temperature this does not entail contrary predication. See the discussion of the four kinds above.

16. Recall that although Plato's primary concern in the middle dialogues was to establish the principle that a Form was a "one" over the infinite and indefinite "many" of its sensible instances, he at least had mentioned in passing at *Republic* 475E and *Phaedo* 104A–B that Forms can combine with one another to form complexes. Even in the middle dialogues the Forms are not represented as being simple in the sense of having no parts.

17. In the *Parmenides*, however, the order of the disjuncts is reversed. For an analysis of the dilemma of participation in terms of this disjunction, see R. E. Allen, op. cit., pp. 113–127.

18. For this analysis of participation in part of the Form, see Allen, op. cit., esp. pp. 116–118.

19. Teloh contends that the classification of pleasures at 12C–13E is according to unseparated (nontranscendent) kinds rather than Forms. In support of this contention, he gives three reasons. First, the emphasis is on the similarities and dissimilarities between pleasures, and this approach would be inappropriate for Forms. In the middle dialogues, phenomena only remind us of the Forms because the former are ontologically deficient. Second, the kind (*genos*) of pleasure is said to be *in* (*en*) phenomenal pleasures (13B) and this terminology does not express the transcendence of a Form. Third, if pleasure, figure, and color mentioned in this passage are Forms, then this constitutes a drastic extension of the members of the Intelligible world. In the middle dialogues, Forms primarily correspond only to relational and attributive predicates. (See Teloh, op. cit., p. 177.)

My response is as follows. Regarding his first reason, as I point out above, the emphasis on dissimilarity is appropriate given Protarchus' position and the fact that although the interrelations of the Forms were acknowledged in the *Republic* and *Phaedo* (see n. 16), the nature of these relations began to be explored only in the later dialogues. Regarding the second reason, as I argue above, I agree with Teloh that pleasure is not itself a Form, but his interpretation of the use of *en* is nevertheless worth discussing since he points to its use in other passages. For example, regarding the third *aporia*, Teloh maintains that one could not ask how phenomena are "in" a Form unless one assumes that they are quasi-physical entities and thus not transcendent (ibid., pp. 179–180). But there is no reason to assume that the term *en* precludes the transcendence of Forms since it and its relatives (*eina, eneinai, keisthai en,* etc.) are used in the *Republic* (at 401C and 434D–435C), where Teloh accepts the presence of transcendent Forms. (For this citation and others, see W. D. Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, 2nd ed., [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953], p. 220). Regarding Teloh's third reason, as I argue above, I do not think that color and figure are Forms but rather are just illustrations of a point about Forms, and the case of pleasure is as yet undetermined. However, as we shall see, the *Philebus* offers reasons to think that there are substantial Forms such as Knowledge and Truth. This does not constitute an extension of the World of the Forms since these two were considered members of the intelligible realm in the *Cratylus* (439–440D) and *Republic* (at 508E–509A), respectively.

20. See Taylor, *Plato: Philebus and Epinomis*, p. 109.

21. See Shorey, op. cit., pp. 281–283.

22. The position shared by Taylor and Shorey on this passage is as follows: the metaphysical puzzles raised by 15Aff. are not even meant to be solved. The mere presence of the one and the many in all our *logoi* (reasoning and discourse), pointed out by Socrates at 15E–16B, constitutes a problem which the method of dialectic (16D–18D) is supposed to help us avoid. Apparently, Taylor and Shorey consider that the fact that "We say that the one and the many become the same by virtue of *logoi*"

(φαμέν που ταὐτὸν ἕν καὶ πολλὰ ὑπὸ λόγων γιγνόμενα περιτρὲχειν), which is a "condition within us" 15D), to be indicative of confusion. In fact, Taylor translates πάθος at 15D as "disease", (op. cit., p. 109) and Shorey thinks that the problems of the one and the many arise from the natural limitations of our language and reason (op. cit., p. 281).

23. See Striker, *Peras und Apeiron*, pp. 18–22.

24. See Gosling, op. cit., pp. 83–84.

25. See Gosling's review of representative interpretations, ibid., pp. 156–165.

26. Ibid., pp. 165ff.

27. Ibid., pp. 165, 166.

28. See Francis M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology* (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc., 1957), pp. 143–146.

29. See Teloh, op. cit., pp. 100–118.

30. Ibid., pp. 139–146. Keep in mind, as Teloh does, that although the visual and discursive models of knowledge are conceptually distinct, Plato often uses both within a single dialogue, as in the *Phaedo* and *Phaedrus*.

31. See Gosling, op. cit., p. 152.

32. As noted in the discussion of the perennial presence of the one and the many, Plato's theory of language depends on his metaphysics. In earlier dialogues at least, the meaning of a term is what it refers to and the names of sensibles refer to the Forms. Cf. R. E. Allen, *Plato's Euthyphro and the Earlier Theory of Forms* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 79–128. Also, Sayre, *Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Resolved,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 7–9.

The dialogues never indicate that Plato developed a theory of language that was independent of his metaphysics.

33. See Gosling, op. cit., pp. 162–163. Another problem which leads Gosling to the conclusion that the Heavenly Tradition is inapplicable to the one and the many problem is observed by Sayre. At 23E–24A, *apeiron* itself is said to be one and many, yet no mathematical bond can unite its varieties, since what it means to be *apeiron* is not to admit mathematical unity. Sayre concedes this last point but maintains that the Heavenly Tradition (or, to use Sayre's phrase, "godly method") *is* the method of collection and division and that the collection mentioned at 23E is a gathering of different types of *apeiron* in order to discern their common characteristic. See Sayre, op. cit., p. 147.

Sayre modifies his position in a footnote where he admits that although subject to collection, *apeiron* (or *peras*) could not be divided because it (as well as *peras*) is not a Form: op. cit., p. 297, n. 52. One might well wonder how the Heavenly Tradition

could be—as Sayre claims—the method of collection and division found in the *Phaedrus, Sophist,* and *Statesman* and yet also not involve the division of Forms. I agree with Sayre on the former, but not on the latter, point.

34. Cf. J. R. Trevaskis, who assumes the same thing. See "Classification in the Philebus," *Phronesis*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1960), pp. 39–44. He concludes, correctly, that the method described here is a general classificatory scheme, but incorrectly infers that it therefore cannot be collection and division: ibid., p. 42.

35. See J. M. Moravcsik, "Forms, Nature, and the Good in the *Philebus*," *Phronesis,* vol. I, no. 24 (1979), pp. 81–104.

36. Ibid., p. 87.

37. Ibid., p. 88.

38. Ibid., p. 92, n. 20, p. 103.

39. For more on Platonic vs. Aristotelian definitions, See Allen, op. cit.

40. Trevaskis, W. G. Runciman, and Richard Bluck claim, against Cornford, that πολλῶν at 253D refers to particulars, not Ideas. As Bluck puts it, if Ideas were meant, the appositional ἑνὸς ἑκάστου would not be neuter, but feminine since ιδέα is feminine. See Bluck, *Plato's Sophist,* ed. Gordon C. Neal (Manchester: University Press, 1975), p. 126–127. See also Runciman, *Plato's Later Epistemology* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1962), p. 62. Compare with Cornford, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge* (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1951), pp. 267–268.

But as Trevaskis points out, Cornford can distinguish between a neuter and a feminine. He cites Cornford, op. cit., p. 189, n. 2, where Cornford deliberately translates a neuter as if it were feminine. See Trevaskis, "Division and its Relation to Dialectic and Ontology in Plato," *Phronesis*, 12 (1967), 122, n. 9. The problem is that the passage is about the dialectic, which deals with Forms, not sensibles.

41. Once again, there is considerable controversy over how to interpret this part of the sentence as well as the sentence as a whole. Trevaskis agrees with my reading this part of the sentence as referring to a different group of ideas than those mentioned at first at 253D. See op. cit., pp. 120–121. Taylor thinks that these completely separate Forms are contraries although he also considers them to be "categorical characters like rest/motion, identity/otherness." See *Plato: The Sophist and the Statesman* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1961), p. 157. Bluck, however, denies that they are contraries. See op. cit., pp. 127–130.

Despite the controversial nature of the specific relations mentioned here, the general point that this passage mentions several different relations between Forms is fairly clear.

42. See Roger Shiner, *Knowledge and Reality in Plato's Philebus* (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1974), pp. 40–41.

43. Ibid., p. 41.

44. Gregory Vlastos, "The Third Man Argument in the *Parmenides*," reprinted in R. E. Allen, *Studies in Plato's Metaphysics* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 254–255.

45. See Robin Waterfield, *Plato's Philebus* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, and New York: Penguin Books Ltd., 1982), p. 63, n. 2.

46. See Sayre, op. cit., pp. 131–133.

47. For Sayre's position and my objections to it, see the Appendix.

48. Cf. J. M. E. Moravcsik, "The Anatomy of Plato's Divisions," *Exegesis and Argument,* ed. A. Mourelatos and R. Rorty, *Phronesis,* supp. vol. 1 (1973), pp. 328–329.

49. Of course, some relations between Forms do not affect perceptible things. Thus at *Sophist* 256B, Motion is said to partake of Rest although earlier at 250A and 252D, motion and rest are said not to mix or combine. This makes sense if in the former case, Motion and Rest refer to Forms and in the latter, to collections of sensibles. It is not "strange" (256B) that Motion partakes of Rest because all the Forms do, i.e., they are at rest in the sense of being immutable. But of course, sensibles in motion cannot at the same time and in the same respect be at rest for this would violate the law of non-contradiction. But of the Forms listed in the *Philebus*, a separation between what is true of Forms and what holds between their instances does not seem necessary.

50. An alternative explanation is offered by David Kolb ("Pythagoras Bound: Limit and Unlimited in Plato's *Philebus*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 21, no. 4 (October 1983), pp. 497–511). He claims that the individual and the universal are arrived at together while applying the Divine Method because the unlimited and unity are always involved with each other and neither principle is more basic than the other. But Kolb supports this view by appealing to Aristotle's testimony at *Metaphysics* I.6, which I maintain is dubious (see Appendix).

51. This, of course, does not mean that Plato does not employ terms that might suggest possession or containment of one Form in another or in sensibles. At 18B, for example, he says that a number "possesses" (ἔχοντα) a plurality, and at 18E–19A, he states that Knowledge and Pleasure each "possess" (κέκηται) definite number. But such terms do not seem to be used in a technical sense.

52. See Moravcsik, "Forms, Nature and the Good in the Philebus," *Phronesis,* 24 (1979), p. 90.

53. Teloh maintains that the one is the genus, the many the species, and the indefinite the particulars, and that the genus is "in" both its species and individual instances. Teloh never explains this "being-in" relation but he suggests that it is like

the Aristotelian picture of the genus being dependent upon its species, and most of all on its sensible instances, for conceptual content. In other words, the genus or kind is simply the sum of its species and instances. Thus the ontology of the *Philebus* anticipates Aristotle and contemporary notions of natural kinds. (See Teloh, op. cit., pp. 180–183).

I already have discussed in the Introduction my disagreement with Teloh's approach. In the same vein, I shall add here that even if Teloh is right that Plato has eliminated the ontological priority of Forms over sensibles in the *Philebus*, it seems highly unlikely that he would go so far as to make sensibles the primary reality, which Aristotle at least in some moments does, or as contemporary advocates of natural kinds do. This reductionist or nominalist tendency seems quite at odds with the role the Forms still play in the *Philebus* as the epistemological and evaluative standards to which one must refer in order to understand reality and to value it properly. This point will be elaborated subsequently, especially in Chapter Two.

54. David Kolb, against Gosling (op. cit., p. 182), points out that Socrates' argument at 21Cff. is more than a mere *ad hominem* against Protarchus. Plato is claiming that "we need intelligence in order to have anything that could be called *one* temporally unified *life* of enjoyment. One *cannot* 'enjoy oneself' *without* realizing one is enjoying oneself." (op. cit., pp. 503–504). But even Kolb concedes that Plato fails to show that human life is better than an oyster's existence (ibid., pp. 504–550).

55. Jacob Klein ("About Plato's *Philebus*," *Interpretation*, 2:1 p. 170, cited by Sean P. O'Connell, "Plato's *Philebus*," *Auslegung*, vol. 10, no. 3, p. 257), interprets Socrates' failure to divide pleasure into *eide* as a sign that pleasure is not an *eidos* at all. I agree, but, as I state above, this does not mean that pleasure cannot be analyzed according to Forms. In fact, it must be so.

56. As Hackforth notes, *Plato's Examination of Pleasure*, p. 29.

57. The fact that Socrates does not consider himself completely adept at plying the Divine Method was already pointed out at 16B.

58. See Sayre, *Plato's Late Ontology*, pp. 108–113, Henry Jackson, "Plato's Later Theory of Ideas," "The *Parmenides*," *The Journal of Philology*, 12:288–89, and Teloh, op. cit., pp. 186–187.

59. One of the implications of my interpretation is that *apeiron*, as one of the kinds, is itself a Form. I have argued elsewhere that this is a plausible reading. (See my "Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Unresolved," *Ancient Philosophy*, 8 [Spring 1988], pp. 108–109.) As a more modest claim, the *Apeiron* at least involves Forms insofar as it has any definitive aspects at all. Otherwise, to analyze the indefinite pleasures would be impossible.

60. I agree with G. M. A. Grube (*Plato's Thought* [Boston: Beacon Press, 1968], pp. 302–303), and with Sir David Ross (op. cit., 1st edition [1951], pp. 133–135), that Forms cannot be generated in the sense that sensibles are, by coming

into existence in time. Georges Rodier speaks of the "metaphysical causality" of Forms, but his interpretation depends on his Neo-Platonic assumption that everything—including other Forms—participates in the One, which is responsible for the activities and movements of the Ideas. (See Rodier, *Etudes de Philosophie Grecque*, articles from 1900–1906, 3rd ed. [Paris: Urin, 1981], pp. 22–23, 24–25, 26–28; cf. Plotinus, *Enneads*, VI, IX, V, VI. 3, cited by E. R. Dodds, *Proclus: The Elements of Theology*, 2nd ed. [Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1963], p. 128.)

More recently, Roger Shiner, following G. E. L. Owen, has considered this reference to the *genesis* of *ousiai* to indicate that Plato is rejecting the χωρισμός between sensibles and Forms in the *Philebus*. See Shiner, op. cit., p. 43, and Owen, "The Place of the *Timaeus* in Plato's Dialogues," in R. E. Allen, *Studies in Plato's Metaphysics* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 254–55. But as I shall show in my discussion of Being and Becoming and of *technai* and dialectic in Chapter Two, no such radical rejection is suggested.

61. Perhaps Plato resorted to terminology that suggests efficient causality when he meant another type of cause. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that other Greek philosophers have done so as well. Proclus, for example, describes his *aitia* as τὸ παρακτικόν and as being fecund (γόνιμα) and having the power of creation (δύναμιν ἔχοντα τοῦ ποιεῖν). See E. R. Dodds, *Elements of Theology*, Proposition 7, 11, 1, 7–8. Yet since he is discussing θεολογική (in the Aristotelian sense, i.e., metaphysics) and not φύσις, it seems more likely that he is referring to causes in the nonsensible realm. He even talks of a monad as "generating" (ἀποεννᾷ) the plurality (prop. 21, 1.4) or "producing" (ὑφίτησιν) it (prop. 23, 1.22). Here, clearly, generation in the sense of efficient causality cannot be meant. See op. cit.

62. As Gosling notes, op. cit., p. 97.

63. Ibid.

64. As Cornford observes concerning the *Timaeus*, Plato acknowledges only two possibilities concerning the nature of the cosmos: either it is orderly and purposeful, analogous to a product of human *techne*, or it is the result of spontaneous generation without intelligence. Essentially the same point is made at *Sophist* 265C and *Laws* 888E–892C as well as at *Philebus* 28D. In the *Laws*, this point is made in an ethical context; all law and morality, if not founded upon the order and rationality of nature, is conventional and therefore relative. See F. M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology*, pp. 166–167. This is a recurrent Platonic theme which forms the basis of Socrates' refutation of Callicles in the *Gorgias* and his refutation of Thrasymachus (including the restatement of his case by Glaucon and Adeimantus) in the *Republic*. Significantly, the *Timaeus* opens with Socrates' summary of the sketch he gave of the Ideal State the day before (17A–19B). Plato's general purpose here is to base his conception of the Good Life (and of the Ideal State in particular), on the order of the universe. The Good for humanity must promote harmony in the soul, which is the

miniature counterpart of the World-Soul and Cosmic harmony. This is also the reason Plato introduces the four kinds into the ostensibly ethical discussion of the *Philebus*.

65. The Greek of this passage, which consists of a single sentence, is notoriously ambiguous, though not, as Hackforth claims, unnatural or corrupt (op. cit., pp. 55–56). Here is the passage from Burnet's text in full:

> Οὐ γάρ που δοκοῦμέν γε, ὦ Πρώταρχε, τὰ τέτταρα ἐκεῖνα, πέρας καί ἄπειρον καὶ κοινὸν καὶ τὸ τῆς αἰτίας γένος ἐν ἅπασι τέταρτον ἐνόν, τοῦτο ἐν μὲν τοῖς παρ' ἡμῖν ψυχήν τε παρέχον καὶ σωμασκίαν ἐμποιοῦν καὶ πταίσαντος σώματος ἰατρικὴν καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ἄλλα συντιθὲν καὶ ἀκούμενον πᾶσαν καὶ παντοίαν σοφίαν ἐπικαλεῖσθαι, τῶν δ' αὐτῶν τούτων ὄντων ἐν ὅλῳ τε οὐρανῷ καὶ κατὰ μεγάλα μέρη, καὶ προσέτι καλῶν καὶ εἰλικρινῶν, ἐν τούτοις δ' οὐκ ἄρα μεμηχανῆσθαι τὴν τῶν καλλίστων καὶ τιμιωτάτων φύσιν.

I take τοῦτο (30B) referring to τὸ τῆς αἰτίας γένος, as the subject of this sentence, although, like Hackforth (op. cit., pp. 56–57), the *aitia* refers to a single Cause, not members of the kind. I also, like Hackforth, consider the last words of the passage, τὴν τῶν καλλίστων καὶ τιμιωτάτων φύσιν, to refer to the World Soul. The use of the plural reflects Plato's ambivalent treatment of superhuman souls and deity in general. Plato often uses "gods" and "god" interchangeably (e.g., *Republic* 378Eff) and also thinks the stars are divine (e.g., *Timaeus* 40Dff; *Epinomis* 984D).

66. As Hackfoth notes (op. cit., p. 123) the Good is not identical with Cosmic *nous*. I, however, differ from Hackforth in that I take the "god" or Demiourgos to be a metaphorical expression for the Good, not a separate entity. In taking the Demiourgos in the *Timaeus* as a mythical figure I follow Eduard Zeller, *Plato and the Older Academy,* tr. Sarah Francis Alleyne and Alfred Goodwin (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1888), pp. 26–46, n. 111, and Cornford, op. cit., pp. 23ff. As the latter observes, two features about the sensible world do not enable any account of it to be more than a "likely story." First, the physical cosmos is a likeness or image and this cannot itself be the object of knowledge or truth (29B–C). Second, since according to the Greeks the world always existed, any account of it as being created in time by a creator god is a myth.

Of course, what remains is the apparent problem of squaring the talk about production, both in the *Timaeus* and *Philebus*, with the usual "static" view of the Good. The problem is particularly pressing in the *Philebus*, where the Cause is said to have *nous* and *phronesis*, as well as *sophia*. These terms *cannot* be taken too literally. In general, what would apply to us as knowers would apply to the Good as the known. So that while our *nous* directly intuits the structure of the world of the Forms, the Good orders that world. And while our *phronesis* enables us to model ourselves and our world after the Forms, the Good is that model for us. More about this will be said in Chapter Three.

67. What then is the *nous* at work in the universe as a whole? My interpretation only denies that it is transcendent. The two possibilities of what *nous* is are: (1) it is part of the World-Soul (see Zeller, op. cit.); or (2) it is a mythical representation of the fact that the cosmos is intelligible *as if* it were animated by an intelligent force or being. The text could support either. If the correspondence between the human body and soul with the cosmos is taken literally, then if the human soul is intelligent, so is the World-Soul. Yet, of course, not every soul need be intelligent, so *nous* is only a part of the soul. On the other hand, the fact that Zeus is mentioned suggests that the argument is meant simply to make the general point about the intelligibility of the universe, not that the universe is itself intelligent. Cf. *Gorgias* 503D–508A, where Plato makes the same basic point, but wraps it in Pythagorean mythology.

68. Gosling, op. cit., pp. 196–199.

69. Ibid., p. 173.

70. Sayre, op. cit., pp. 270–271.

Chapter 2

1 A. E. Taylor, *Philebus and Epinomis*, p. 56. Cf. R. Hackforth, *An Examination of Pleasure*, p. 58.

2. Hackforth, op. cit., p. 59.

3. J. C. B. Gosling, *Plato's Philebus*, pp. 101–102.

4. It is true that Plato only speaks of the mixture of the psychic pleasure of expectation with the bodily pain of want. In fact, at 35E–36B, Plato mentions cases where psychic pain arises only when the soul realizes that there is no hope of fulfillment, as Dorothea Frede has noted ("Rumpelstiltskin's Pleasures: True and False Pleasures in Plato's *Philebus*," *Phronesis*, vol. 30, no. 2 (1985), pp. 164–165). But cannot one be pained by just *probable* failure and yet still cling to hope? Cannot one hope for fulfillment and yet be pained by the fear of dissatisfaction at the same time? This is a case of what we call "mixed emotion," where pleasure and pain are experienced simultaneously although presumably by different parts of the soul; a justified hope or fear would be rational while the other would be nonrational. Fear and yearning (a close cousin of hope, at least in some cases) are mentioned by Plato as psychic mixtures of pleasure and pain at 47E. Although he does distinguish between such emotive mixtures and those of expectation which involve the body and depletion and replenishment (47C–E), the possibility of a type of expectation which is not related directly to an opposing bodily state does not seem to be ruled out.

5. I already have observed that not every combination of *apeiron* and *peras* is good. What makes the mixed life good shall be discussed in Chapter III.

6. Hackforth, op. cit., pp. 82–83.

7. The relevance of the *Republic* discussion to the *Philebus* has been discussed also by N. R. Murphy, *The Interpretation of Plato's Republic* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1960); R. A. H. Waterfield, "The Place of the *Philebus* in Plato's Dialogues," *Phronesis*, vol. 25, no. 3 (1980); and Dorothea Frede, op. cit.

8. For further references about the Pythagorean influence, see J. Adam, *The Republic of Plato,* vol. 2; p. 349, n. 13.

9. For further discussion, see R. L. Nettleship, *Lectures and Remains,* vol. 2, pp. 322–327, cited by Adam, loc. cit.

10. In the *Philebus*, Plato classifies these latter separately, as belonging to the soul alone.

11. For further discussion, see Adam, op. cit., pp. 354, 381–383.

12. This distinction is often lost on contemporary commentators. Hence Terry Penner ("False Anticipatory Pleasures: *Philebus* 36a3–41a6," *Phronesis*, vol. 15, no. 2 (1970), pp. 166–178) and Dorothea Frede (op. cit.) take propositional truth to be primary for Plato in the *Philebus*. But Plato's own examples do not support this assumption, as I argue above.

13. Hackforth, op. cit., p. 72.

14. This is the usual way to interpret this passage. See A. E. Taylor, op. cit., pp. 63–67 and Hackforth, op. cit., p. 73. A variation on this theme comes from Penner (op. cit., pp. 171–176) and Frede (op. cit., pp. 168–174) who argue that such pleasures are false because what the agent hopes for or believes in, i.e., the propositional content of the hope or belief, fails to correspond to the facts.

15. The good person is good in the sense of being just and pious and *thus* is called "a friend of the gods" (39E). No suggestion, *contra* Frede (op. cit., p. 167, n. 34), is made that the good person is successful in having true pleasure because of "a divine back-up."

16. Gosling (op. cit., pp. 215–217) accuses Plato of confusing the picture with the picturing. Penner (op. cit., pp. 171–173) makes a similar point about the distinction between the *process* of believing or being pleased and the *product, what* one believes in or is pleased about. He claims that Plato is not fully aware of the ambiguity of words like *doxa* which can refer to either the process of believing or the thing believed. Frede, (op. cit., pp. 168–171) on the other hand, maintains that Plato was aware of this ambiguity and switches the meaning of *doxa* to the passive sense (the thing believed) in order to prove that pleasures, like opinions, have propositional content and may be true or false in the propositional sense. On my reading, none of these distinctions are relevant for Plato since, for him, truth primarily has an ontological rather than a propositional sense.

17. Cf. *Republic* 580–583. As noted above, Plato compares the lives of the philosopher, honor-lover, and money-lover, and declares that the philosopher's pleasures, which issue from the pursuit of truth (the Forms) are the sweetest or most pleasant.

18. Hackforth, op. cit., p. 78.

19. Gosling, op. cit., pp. 219–220.

20. Gosling, *ibid.*, p. 219.

21. The ability of the appetites (and *thumos*) to have beliefs has been acknowledged by many scholars, including Terry Penner, Jon Moline, Julia Annas, and Glenn Lesses. Texts cited in support of this contention include the following: *Republic* 442D, where Plato says that temperance is the agreement in opinion between all three parts of the soul about who should rule; 574D–E, where Plato describes the opinions of the appetites which normally rule only in sleep but in the tyrant rule in waking life as well; and 602E–604B, where Plato describes the conflict between the opinions of the rational and irrational parts of the soul. See Penner, "Thought and Desire In Plato," *Plato II*, ed. Gregory Vlastos (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1971); Moline, "Plato on the Complexity of the Psyche," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. 60 (1978) no. 1; Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), chapter 5; Lesses, "Weakness, Reason and the Divided Soul in Plato's *Republic*," *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 2 (April 1987).

More controversial is the issue of whether the appetites (and *thumos*) can have beliefs about the good. Penner maintains that Plato, *contra* Socrates, denies this (pp. 103–108). Moline *implies* that the appetites have an idea of the good at least in the sense of a *teîos* or ultimate end (p. 10), and both he and Annas maintain that the appetites are able to"think" about how to achieve their ends. Lesses goes so far as to say that the nonrational parts of the soul have beliefs about the good. I agree that the appetites *do* have a conception of the good, namely pleasure, but to argue for this as an interpretation of the *Republic* would go beyond the scope of this work.

22. Here Plato uses the so-called principle of non-contradiction (which for him applies to the world and not just to logic) that he introduced earlier at 436B to prove that there are distinct parts of the soul.

23. For the purposes of this discussion, one need not decide whether Socrates is represented as a hedonist in the *Protagoras* or whether such a position was ever endorsed by Plato. For an interpretation that affirms both propositions, see Terence Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1977), chapter 4. On the face of it, though, Socrate's remark that by the end of the dialogue he and Protagoras have switched positions indicates that the *Protagoras* is meant to be *aporetic*. Unsound arguments are generated because the characters try to answer questions

about virtue without first establishing *what* it is. In this respect, the *Protagoras* is like the *Meno*.

24. As I shall demonstrate in Chapter Three, only necessary and pure pleasures are admitted into the good life. The pleasures associated with health would qualify but not the eating, or at least not the indiscriminate eating, of ice cream. But the question still remains: why are the pleasures of health good? Clearly because health itself is good. As in the four kinds passage, Plato conceives of health as a harmony or state of equilibrium between opposites such as the wet and the dry, the hot and the cold. As such, it is *meikton*, and compared to the *apeiron* of eating the ice cream, it would approximate reason's idea of completeness and limit. So reason could choose the pleasures of health over those of eating the ice cream quite apart from considerations of how pleasant or painful each experience may be. Plato suggests at 58D that reason, as the faculty of soul which by its very nature loves truth and does all things for truth's sake, values completeness and purity as related to truth. So by using completeness, limit, purity, exactness, and truth as criteria rather than pleasure and pain, the dieter could escape his dilemma.

25. Gosling, op. cit., p. 220.

26. Note that the method of considering extreme cases is not Socrates' own but rather is that of the enemies of Philebus. Hence in taking this method as a sign that the nature of a kind is found in its phenomena, Teloh is misguided. See Teloh, op. cit., p. 183.

27. Surely Hackforth is right when he says that Plato means here that these pleasures (or pains) have the body as their source (op. cit., p. 61).

28. There are two further references to the divine life. One occurs at 55A while Socrates is pointing out the absurdities of the hedonist life. Pleasures arise because of generation, e.g., the processes involved in hunger and thirst, and generation is inevitably linked with destruction (54E). So when one chooses generation, one is also choosing destruction and not "the third life" of neither pleasure nor pain but of pure thought. Here Plato seems to be suggesting that the best alternative to hedonism is the divine life.

In the second passage, the reference is less explicit. At 65B, Socrates says that anyone would be able to decide whether pleasure or knowledge (*phronesis*) is more akin to the highest good and more honorable among humans *and gods*. The inclusion of the gods here suggests that what they value is of some relevance to the ranking of values in the good life for humanity. Perhaps part of Socrates' appeal to the gods is meant to counter the hedonists who enlist the "testimony" of all the beasts in the world to prove that pleasure is the greatest blessing in life (67B).

29. *Kinaidia* is sometimes translated "unmanliness," but in context, the *kinaidos* seems to be one who engages in specific sexual practices which K. J. Dover has associated with passive homosexuality. These practices and those who habitually

engaged in them were generally thought to be disgraceful and "unmanly." See Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1978), pp. 75–76.

30. Plato does discuss feelings evoked by comedy at *Republic* 606C, but considers only the enjoyment that comes from allowing oneself to indulge in buffooneries that one would disdain in ordinary life. He does not even mention the fact that watching comedy can be painful as well as pleasant.

31. See *Republic* 606B, where Plato suggests that the pleasure of weeping at a tragedy is vicarious.

32. A. E. Taylor suggests two reasons why watching a comedy is in some respect painful. One is simply that malice is "in its very nature a painfully toned emotion" (op. cit., p. 74). The second is that to see a fellow human make a fool of himself is painful to anyone with a sense of humanity (ibid.). But Taylor's suggestions do not go far enough. *How* is feeling malicious painful as well as pleasant? *Why* is it human to feel pain at those making fools of themselves? Note that Plato only considers the delight in the misfortunes of one's friends, those with whom one can identify in some way, as malicious and therefore painful in some respect. He is not assuming that there exists within us some general sympathy for all humankind, including our enemies or strangers. Rather, his analysis of comedy here more likely would parallel his treatment of tragedy in the *Republic*, that through identification with the comic character we feel the painful humiliation we would feel for ourselves if we realized that we were self-deceived.

33. See 62A–B, where Plato refers to the circle and sphere, along with the knowledge of them, as "divine." Since Justice itself is also listed as an object of divine knowledge, we may reasonably infer that the divine circle and sphere are mathematical Forms.

34. See Hackforth, op. cit., pp. 99–100, and Taylor, *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), p. 451, as cited by Hackforth, p. 99.

35. See Hackforth, loc. cit.

36. The hedonist Plato has in mind here, like Callicles, cannot imagine a life without hunger and thirst, since the pleasures that follow these processes are the center of his or her life (54E). In spite of the fact that destruction is the inevitable accomplice of generation, the hedonist would still choose such a life instead of the third (i.e., divine) life of pure thought, which contains neither pleasure nor pain (55A). The hedonist, since he or she equates pleasure with the good, cannot recognize the value of other goods of the soul, such as virtue, and judges people as good or bad depending on whether they are experiencing pleasure or pain, respectively (5B–C).

I agree with Hackforth (op.cit., pp. 111–112) that Plato brings up these points not as an important refutation of hedonism but rather to set the stage for the upcoming discussion of which types of pleasure and knowledge should be included in the good (mixed) life.

37. Gosling holds that Plato allies himself with these "clever people" not because he accepts their general account of pleasure but because he agrees that the pursuit of physical pleasure as a life goal is an "oddity" (op. cit., p. 221). Cf. Hackforth (op. cit., p. 106), who is more open to the idea that the Being/Becoming argument is Plato's own. I agree that Plato does not subscribe to the position of the clever people *in toto*, but since he has extensively criticized the hedonistic life before (as Gosling himself notes) he hardly needs to introduce what I am calling his"ontological argument" to make such a well-established point. Instead, I think that Plato simply needs a device to emphasize the ontological underpinnings of his attack on hedonism in order to prepare the way for the epistemological and ontological analyses of knowledge and the Good which are to follow. Hackforth also cites this passage, op. cit., p. 108. For these reasons and for others which I shall reveal shortly, I reject Henry Teloh's suggestions that brave lovers, etc., are examples of *phenomenal* οὐσίαι and thus evidence that Plato has in the *Philebus* "upgraded" the ontological status of sensibles. See Teloh, *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics*.

38. See Gosling, op. cit., p. 126. Thus this example of music stands in marked contrast to the musical knowledge of intervals given as an illustration of the Divine Method (see Chapter One).

39. See J. B. Skemp, *Plato's Statesman* (Indianapolis: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc., 1957), p. 48, n. 12.

40. Here Plato is referring to the two types of pure or true pleasures: the "divine" and less divine (i.e., the painless). The false pleasures are not simply"less true" than the pure ones; they are distortions of reality, although some are more so than others. The pleasures based on false belief or on exaggeration are at least pleasant in some sense while those feelings which result from the neutral state are not (nor are they painful). Plato mentions at 51A pleasures that are "not at all real," i.e., the intense impure pleasures which later are excluded from the good life.

Plato's point in comparing the different forms of knowledge with those of pleasure reminds us that although different types of knowledge vary according to purity and truth just as pleasures did, *techne* and the dialectic (also called *phronesis* and/or *nous*) do not, ideally, *oppose* each other as true and false pleasures do. As we shall see above, *techne* and the dialectic have two different realms as their objects, the sensible and the intelligible, respectively. Neither these two realms nor the faculties that correspond to them are on the same ontological footing. But this does *not* mean that these realms or faculties oppose or exclude each other. Although it is true, as A. E. Taylor points out (*Philebus and Epinomis*, pp. 84–85), that even mathematical thinking is still hypothetical and thus inferior to dialectic which alone grasps the first principle (*Republic* 533C), this does not mean these two are opposed. On the contrary, as the discussion at *Republic* 521Cff. made clear, this does not mean these two are opposed. On the contrary, as the discussion at *Republic* 521Cff. made clear, the study of number and measurement—which is essential in all *technai*—is supposed to lead one to the dialectic. And as I shall discuss shortly, once the dialectic reaches

the Good as the unhypothesized first principle, mathematics—when grounded in this—may become genuine knowledge.

41. Gosling, op. cit., pp. 222–223.

42. Hackforth has noted some of the difficulties of the argument (op. cit., pp. 114–116). It should also be kept in mind that the classification of pleasure is not without method, as we have noted above, and that there is knowledge of pleasure as attested by Plato at 63C. The only point here is that the classification of knowledge is more straightforward than that of pleasure.

43. See Teloh, op. cit., pp. 185–186.

44. Such comparisons are made by Cherniss. See "The Relation of the *Timaeus* to Plato's Later Dialogues" (1957), rpr. in Allen, *Studies in Plato's Metaphysics,* p. 350. Teloh criticizes him for this, p. 185.

45. See Shiner, *Knowledge and Reality in Plato's Philebus,*pp. 55–57, 61–66.

46. See Teloh, op. cit., p. 181.

47. See Hackforth, op. cit., p. 113, n. 1, pp. 127–128.

48. See Richard Mohr, "*Philebus* 55c–62a and Revisionism," *New Essays on Plato,* ed. Francis Jeffry Pelletier and John King-Farlow (Guelph, Ontario: Canadian Association for Publishing in Philosophy, The University of Calgary Press, 1983), p. 167. Others who have questioned Shiner include R. Fahrnkopf, "Forms in the *Philebus*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy,* vol. 15 (April 1977), and R. A. H. Waterfield, "The Place of the *Philebus* in Plato's Later Dialogues," *Phronesis,* vol. 25 (1980).

49. See Mohr, op. cit., p. 166.

50. See Shiner, "Knowledge in *Philebus* 55c–62a: A Response," *New Essays on Plato,* p. 172.

CHAPTER 3

1. I agree with Hackforth that this passage should not be taken as evidence that Plato has altered his"normal" conception of knowledge (*episteme* in the restricted sense) as what grasps the Forms as distinct from *doxa,* which concerns sensibles. Hackforth claims that the only reason Plato did not say in earlier dialogues that knowledge of both sensibles and Forms is needed for human life is simply because the occasion never arose (*Plato's Examination of Pleasure,* pp. 127–128). But Plato did say in the *Republic* that the practical uses of calculation and measurement are necessary for counting troops, organizing battle formations, etc., and in the *Meno* Plato suggests that the value of right opinion is equal to that of knowledge for

practical affairs such as finding the way to Larisa (97A–98C). (I am indebted to Lee Horvitz who reminded me of this latter passage.) Even in the middle dialogues, Plato recognized the need for practical types of cognition in human life.

2. As Hackforth notes (op. cit., p. 124, n.1), Plato does not always restrict the meaning of the terms *nous, phronesis,* and *episteme*, but the context strongly suggests that the first two terms refer to a specially elevated form of knowledge.

3. Hackforth also suggests that the literary device of the personified pleasures and intelligence deciding how they should mix perhaps is meant to indicate that both elements ought to be in agreement about the role of each in the good life (loc. cit., p. 128), but he does not connect this point to the moral psychology of the *Republic*. For more on this connection, see the discussion of the second type of false pleasure in Chapter Two.

4. Plato offers no example of what is necessary for survival only; hence whether there *are* any desires that are needed for survival but are *not* conducive to fitness or beneficial in any other way except in maintaining life is not clear. I mentioned this type as a logical possibility only, which Plato does not rule out.

5. There is no evidence that Plato is here distinguishing between types of pleasure which attend upon virtue in general and those which accompany health and temperance, as Hackforth claims (see *ibid.*).

6. I agree with Bury and Hackforth in emphasizing the close tie between truth and reality or Being. See the discussion of false pleasure in Chapter Two. Cf. R. G. Bury, *The Philebus of Plato* (London: C. J. Clay & Sons, Cambridge University Press, 1897), appendix F, pp. 201ff.; and Hackforth, op. cit., p. 133. For a different view, see Gosling, *Plato's Philebus,* pp. 134–135, 212ff.

7. I am omitting reference to "the eternal" because what follows it is uncertain; as Gosling observes, there is no consensus on the manuscript. The word for "eternal" (ἀίδιον) is preceded by a feminine accusative article and after that what follows, according to some editions of the text, is ἠρῆσθαι (to have taken), and then either φύσιν (nature) or εἰρῆσθαι (to have said). Gosling then notes three possible translations: (1) "and all things of that sort which one must suppose to have acquired the eternal nature" (2) "and all things of that sort which one must suppose the eternal nature to have acquired," and (3) "but first of all the eternal nature is captured somewhere in the region of measure, the moderate, the appropriate, and all things that one must consider of that sort."

On the second translation, the reference to "the eternal nature" remains obscure. The first and third translations make reference to the Forms, as Gosling says. On the first, the measure, the moderate, etc., are said to have eternal nature, and this alludes to their status as Forms. On the third, the word "capture" continues the searching/hunting language of 64C and 65A, which means that the "eternal nature" refers to the good. Of course, Gosling rules out any reference to the Forms in this

passage. (See Gosling, op. cit., pp. 137–138.) My reading would support either the first or the third translations, but I am especially inclined towards the third, with "the eternal nature" referring to the Good as it did in 64C. Gosling remarks that to speak of the Good as having been captured sounds as if "the form of the Good has been run to earth" op. cit., p. 138). Gosling offers this suggestion as a reason *not* to consider "the eternal nature" as a reference to the Good, but I am unconvinced. After all, Socrates *is* trying to bring the Good down to earth since he and his interlocutors are seeking an understanding of how to attain the good life through imitation of the Forms. Of course, the Good remains ontologically independent of the sensible world and so its very nature cannot be captured by human thought; all we can know is how some of its aspects (Proportion, Beauty, and Truth) are manifested.

8. Although Truth is not mentioned in this passage, it belongs to the same class as Proportion and Beauty, as Hackforth also notes, op. cit., pp. 138–139. In fact, Hackforth conjectures that the phrase τὸ τέλεον καὶ ἱκανόν is meant as a description of two qualities or "notes" of τὸ ἀληθές.

9. Kenneth Sayre argues that measure or proportion is the most important component of the Good. See Sayre, *Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Resolved,* pp. 168–174, and "The *Philebus* and the Good," in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy,* vol. 2, ed. John Cleary, (Landham, Md: University Press of America, 1987), p. 70. For my response to his arguments see Cynthia Hampton, "Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Unresolved," *Ancient Philosophy,* vol. 8, Spring 1988, p. 105–116, esp. 111–113.

10. See Vlastos, "Degrees of Reality in Plato", rep. in *Platonic Studies* (2nd ed., Princeton, 1981), p. 64.

11. See Hampton, "Pleasure, Truth and Being in Plato's *Philebus:* A Reply to Professor Frede," *Phronesis*, vol. 32, no. 2 (1987), pp. 256–257.

12. See A. E. Taylor, *Philebus and Epinomis,* p. 91; Hackforth, op. cit., p. 139, p. 140, n.3; and Gosling, op. cit., p. 224.

13. If we consider the World-Soul as a subject, then intelligence is its highest level; if we consider it as an object, then intelligibility is. As mentioned in Chapter One (n. 66), to consider the World-Soul as literally intelligent is unnecessary.

14. See Richard Patterson, *Image and Reality in Plato's Metaphysics,* p. 143.

15. All I am suggesting here is that the Neoplatonic reading is plausible, not that it is true. In fact, the evidence weighs heavily *against* this reading. I heartily agree with David Hitchcock, for example, when he claims that the Good in the *Republic* "has" being (see 509D), and can be known (see 508E, 517B–C, 534B–C). Also, note the *way* in which the Good is said to be beyond Being: in dignity and power. Similarly, the Good was said at 508E and 509A to be more beautiful and more greatly to be honored than being and truth. See David Hitchcock, "The Good in

Plato's *Republic*," *Apeiron*, 19 (Fall 1985), pp. 104–105. The Good is more valuable and powerful than anything else because it is the ultimate first principle of reality, not because it is completely transcendent.

16. As noted in Chapter One (n. 66), I follow Cornford in considering the Demiurge to be a mythic figure.

17. A similar reason might also help explain the use of the Divine Artisan or Demiurge in *Republic* X and in the *Timaeus*.

18. See Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, propositions 8–13.

19. Ibid., propositions 13, 176.

20. For a discussion of the Unity of the Virtues in earlier dialogues, see R. E. Allen, *Euthyphro and The Earlier Theory of Forms*, pp. 93–100.

21. Of course, there is a tension in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* between the life of practical virtue and that of contemplation, but how Aristotle resolves it, if indeed he does, is unclear. In any event, I am claiming that the Platonic answer would be unacceptable to Aristotle since he rejects Plato's universal Good (see book 1 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, especially chapter 5).

22. By "the end," I mean, of course, the *Philebus*. I reserve judgment concerning Plato's very last dialogue, the *Laws*.

Appendix

1. As cited by Jackson, "Plato's Theory of Ideas: The *Parmenides*," *The Journal of Philology*, 12:287–288.

2. Ibid., p. 288.

3. See Henry Jackson, "Plato's Later Theory of Ideas: The *Philebus* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* I.6," *The Journal of Philology*, 10 (1881), pp. 291–292.

4. Ibid., p. 291.

5. Jackson, "The *Parmenides*," pp. 288–289.

6. See Ross, op. cit., pp. 133–135.

7. See Grube, *Plato's Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 302.

8. See Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, pp. 134–135.

9. See Jackson, "The *Philebus* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* I.6," p. 283, and "The *Parmenides*," op. cit., pp. 295–296.

10. As noted by R. E. Allen, "The Argument from Opposites in *Republic* V," *Review of Metaphysics,* 15, 2 (December 1961), p. 329.

11. See Jackson, "The *Parmenides*," p. 325.

12. See the discussion of the Good as Cause in Chapter Three.

13. See Grube, op. cit., p. 302.

14. According to Jackson, in the *Philebus* Plato still postulates eternal, immutable essences that exist separately from particulars. Instead, what Plato rejects are the two key assumptions he made in the *Phaedo* and *Republic:* (1) that a Form corresponds to every common term and (2) the presence of an Idea "in" a particular makes the latter what it is. The rejection of the separation of Forms from sensibles is the central point of twentieth century revisionism.

15. See Sayre, *Plato's Late Ontology*, pp. 17, 84, 167. In fact, besides the hope of at least partially vindicating Aristotle's testimony, Sayre only explicitly claims to present a better interpretation of the *Philebus*. He does not say that his interpretation, which he bases on Aristotle's account of Plato's theory in *Metaphysics* I.6, is a revisionist one. But he shares their main tenet—the denial of the χωρισμὸς. So, in fact, Sayre's interpretation involves justifying at least one strain of revisionism by appealing to Aristotle's testimony, even if this was not his expressed intention.

16. For a more detailed analysis of Sayre's interpretation of the *Philebus*, see my article, "Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Unresolved," *Ancient Philosophy,* 8 (Spring 1988), pp. 105–116.

17. See Sayre, op. cit., pp. 108–113.

18. In fact, both Hackforth (op. cit., p. 42) and Gosling (op. cit., p. 199) interpret *apeiron* this way and without recourse to Aristotle. Sayre does not note this.

19. See Gosling, op. cit., pp. 204–205.

20. See Sayre, op. cit., p. 181.

21. Sayre's citation of *Philebus* 32A–B, even if we accept his controversial reading of εἶδος as referring to the Form of Living Thing, does not help support his point. One is still a long way from defining "Human" when one has only identified that it, like any other living thing, is arranged in a certain order. Note also that from this it does not necessarily follow that the Living Thing (or Human) is a fixed point along a continuum. Finally, Plato presumably thought that a human person was more than simply a series of physiological proportions. See, e.g., *Phaedo* 98A–99A.

22. See Sayre, op. cit., pp. 158–161.

23. Gilbert Ryle, "Review of Cornford's *Plato and Parmenides*," *Mind*, 48 (1939), 539.

24. See Gosling, op. cit., p. 187.

25. See Sayre, op. cit., pp. 168–174.

26. Ibid., pp. 134–136, 162–164, *et passim*.

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PLEASURE, KNOWLEDGE, AND BEING
An Analysis of Plato's *Philebus*
Cynthia Hampton

Hampton illumines the overall structure of the *Philebus*. Taking the interrelations of pleasure, knowledge, and being as the keys to understanding the unity of the dialogue, she focuses on the central point. The analysis of both pleasure and knowledge can be understood fully only if placed within the context of the more general and fundamental question of how human life fits into the overall structure of reality.

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